SALCHA: AN ATHAPASKAN BAND OF THE TANANA RIVER AND ITS CULTURE

A

THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the

University of Alaska in partial fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

(Anthropology)

By

Elizabeth F. Andrews B.A.

Fairbanks, Alaska

May 1975

SALCHA: AN ATHAPASKAN BAND

OF THE TANANA RIVER AND ITS CULTURE

RECOMMENDED:

Chairperson, Advisory Committee

Department Head

APPROVED:

Dean of the College of Behavioral Sciences

May 6, 1975

Date

Provost

5/13/75

Date

ABSTRACT

The Salcha were an Athapaskan-speaking band of east central Alaska. The life style of these people at the turn of this century and their history of contact with whites is reconstructed from historical literature and from recollections cited by two elderly Salcha Indians. These Indians were a semi-nomadic band with a matrilineal kinship organization exploiting such natural resources as caribou, moose and salmon during their annual subsistence cycle. Data presented within a comparative framework indicate a subsistence pattern mid-way between an inland riverine and inland hunting-snaring emphasis. The position of the Salcha band among their Athapaskan neighbors of the Tanana River is determined in light of current linguistic and sociocultural data for these groups.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Throughout the past two years many people contributed and assisted in the gathering of data reported here as well as its presentation. Bessie Barnabas and Eva Moffit were my sole instructors in the former Salcha way of life and their information about that past culture forms the bulk of this thesis. To them I express my heartfelt gratitude not only as instructors and informants during the weekly work sessions, but also as friends and companions in my daily life and on weekend trips to potlatches in the area. Mertie Baggen, who first undertook anthropological work with Bessie Barnabas and Eva Moffit, and who suffered an untimely death was most helpful not only for the notes she left, but also for the dear friendship and rapport she established with the informants. My advisor, Anne D. Shinkwin, has guided me through all phases of this work from her initial suggestion to continue what Ms. Baggen had begun to the finished work presented here. Her advice, instruction and patience are gratefully acknowledged.

To many others I am thankful too. The people of Nenana, Minto, and Tanacross hosted me at potlatches in their respective villages while Robert and Elsie Titus of Minto, Julius and Greta Paul of Tanacross and Bonnie Reed of Nenana provided

a home for me on those occasions. M.E. Krauss of the Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska provided me with a basic understanding of Athapaskan languages and those spoken on the Tanana River in particular. Nancy McRoy provided me with a linguistic transcription of the kinship terminology as well as a list of Salcha phonemes in order to facilitate my own transcriptions. M. Bucholtz and S. Tack of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game assisted in providing information on the fauna and fish of the region. D.F. Murray, Curator of the Herbarium of the University of Alaska Museum, L. Viereck of the Institute of Northern Forestry, and O.K. Miller of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University supplied floral and fungal identifications. D. Slaby assisted with pertinent ethnographic data from Minto. The University of Alaska Archives and Brian Stocklin supplemented my own photographs. And lastly, I am grateful to the University of Alaska Department of Anthropology and the native peoples of Alaska who introduced me to some of the many different peoples and life styles of the world past and present.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF FIGURES (Continued)

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This is the first ethnographic and historic account of the Salcha River band of Northern Athapaskans in Alaska who previously occupied the area near the mouth of the Salcha River, camps along that river as far as Caribou Creek, and other camps southeast to Big Delta on both sides of the Tanana, southwest to the headwaters of Dry Creek and Little Delta River, west to Wood River and north to Moose Creek (Fig. 1). The account is primarily descriptive, describing the lifeways of this Athapaskan band in east central Alaska in order to contribute to the existing data on bands along the Tanana River. These data provide a comparative perspective which increases our understanding of similarities and differences of Northern Athapaskans in central Alaska.

Classifications of the Tanana River Indians have varied. As early as 1899, W.J. Peters and A.H. Brooks (1899:74) suggested three subdivisions of these Indians--those who resided near the Tok and Tetlin rivers, the Goodpaster and Delta rivers, and from the Nenana River to the mouth of the Tanana. A year later, A.H. Brooks (1900:491) presented a twofold scheme based on the salmon resource--the "Upper Tanana" (Lake Mansfield and Tetlin River area) and the "Lower Tanana"

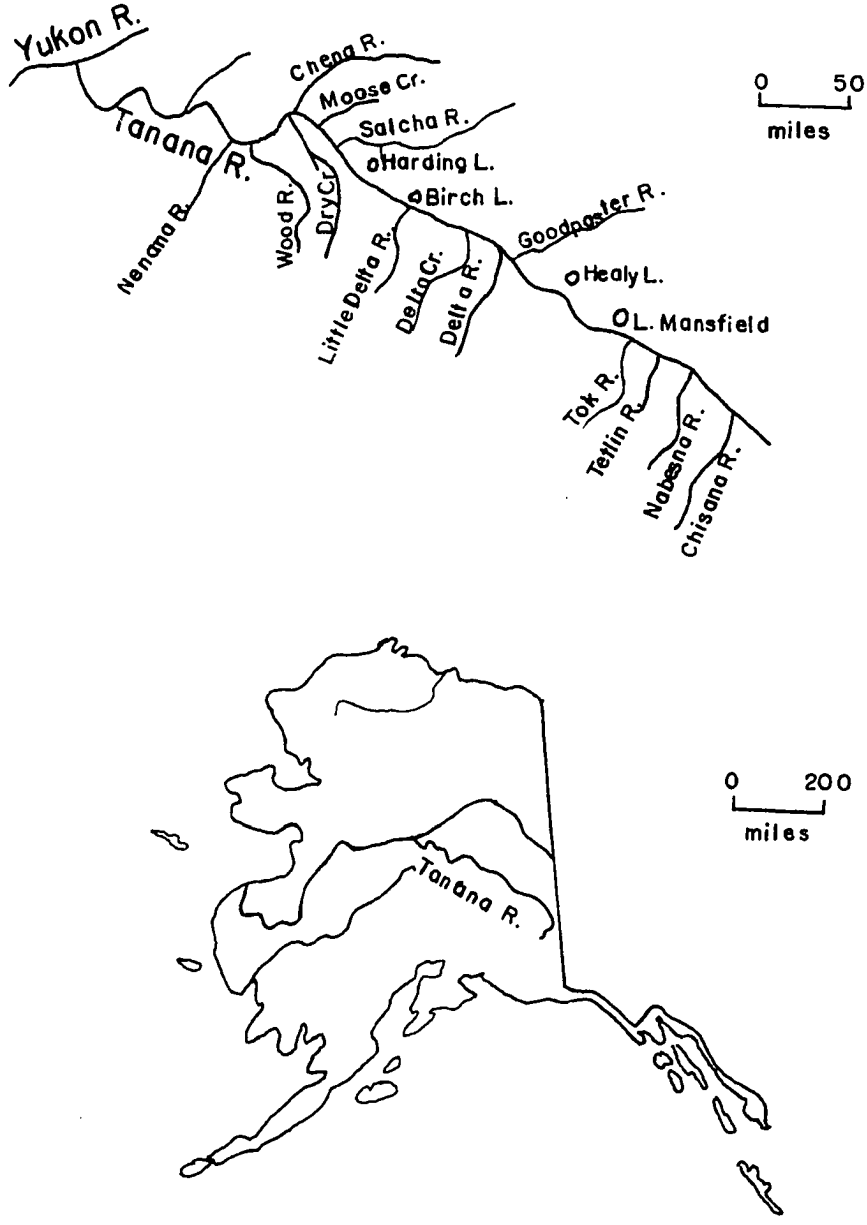


Fig. 1. Situation in Alaska

who had access to salmon. Erroneously believing that the salmon resource did not extend as far as the Goodpaster, Brooks considered the Salcha and Goodpaster Indians to be a subgroup of the Upper Tanana. R.A. McKennan (1959) delineated the Upper Tanana Indians as those Indians inhabiting the vicinity of the Nabesna and Chisana rivers and down the Tanana to the Tok River. In a later report, McKennan (1970) presented a three-fold classification similar to that of Peters and Brooks (1899). Recently, M-F. Guedon (1971) extended the term "Upper Tanana" to include Tanacross (Mansfield). Since her informants designated all people beyond the Salcha by a special term it is possible that the Upper Tanana designation might be extended as far as the Salcha (Guedon 1971:37). Following the presentation of data on the Salcha band, the classifications of the Tanana River Indians will be examined in light of the Salcha data.

It is through such a comparative framework that the delineation of the Salcha band and its position among other east central Alaskan Athapaskans is determined. In filling out the ethnographic picture with the addition of the Salcha data, the amassed data for the Tanana River can make a contribution for future comparative studies of band cultures along the length of major river systems. While the focus is on Salcha culture, data were obtained on the Goodpaster band which resided in the area southeast of Salcha territory near the mouth

of the Goodpaster River. These data are included as a comparison to the Salcha information since the informants were knowledgeable about that band through proximity as well as economic and social ties. In documenting several cultural continuums, our understanding of Northern Athapaskans in general can be greatly expanded. In addition, since the Salcha represent a matrilineal band with a subsistence pattern midway between a hunting-snaring emphasis and an inland riverine (caribou-salmon) emphasis, these data are of general anthropological interest in light of the increasing attention being given to band societies, as evidenced by such symposia as the Ottawa Conference on Band Societies in September 1965 (Damas 1969) and the Chicago Man the Hunter symposium in April 1966 (Lee and DeVore 1968).

The description included here is that of Saachaege--the mouth of the Salcha River, the people at the mouth of the Salcha River, the language of these people, the way of life of the people at the mouth of the Salcha. Early explorers and traders used the corrupted term "Salchaket" while throughout this paper the term "Salcha" is employed to coincide with current geographical terminology in referring to the Salcha River area (U.S. Geological Survey Map N6400-W14400/60X180). Most aspects of the culture of the Salcha people disappeared within thirty years following the discovery of gold near Fairbanks in 1902. The two survivors of the former Salcha lifeway and their few descendants are now members of the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc., one of the twelve

regional native corporations which resulted from the Alaska Native Land Claims Act of 1971. This thesis is an anthropological record of the culture of the Salcha band as it existed in one place and at one time as carried out by some 30 individuals who constituted the band around the year 1900. There is no discussion of either origins or change presented here.

The Salcha band was selected as an opportunity to record the past life style of a people from the oral record of the only two survivors of that culture. In 1962, R.A. McKennan, during an ethnographic survey along the Tanana River, collected miscellaneous data on the Salcha and Goodpaster bands. Some ten years ago another graduate student (Mertie Baggen) began the task of recording the past culture of the Salcha but, due to her unfortunate death some four years after its inception, the task was never completed and the history was never written. Two years ago, I sought out the same informants and with their encouragement we began to work at reconsturcting the past.

The senior informant is a woman who was born near the mouth of the Salcha River in the mid-1880's. During her childhood she traveled with her parents throughout the Salcha area during the annual cycle and also made trips to Tanana and Circle to trade. With the establishment of the Episcopal mission at Salcha in 1909, a more permanent residence was made at Salcha and the subsistence round, though still seminomadic, did not

extend as far to the west and southwest as it had in former years. Around 1955, she moved from her residence at Salcha to Fairbanks where she still resides.

The junior informant, daughter of the senior informant, was also born at Salcha. Born in 1907, she attended school intermittently at the Salcha mission until its closure in 1920. Unlike her mother, she never made trips to Tanana or Circle to trade, but instead traded furs and skins in Fairbanks. She resided at Salcha near the fish camp until about 1950 when she moved to Fairbanks where she still resides.

Questions have been raised (Lee and DeVore 1968:6) as to whether we can describe culture by reconstruction. In the ethnographic reconstruction of the Cahuilla Indians, Bean (1972:15-16) maintains that we can, but operates with four assumptions in "viewing culture at a distance:"

1) a model of a culture can persist through time in the minds of the people, and that it [the model] is accurate in a broad sense

2) cultures which have a tradition of oral history are skilled in maintaining extensive and minutely detailed information about themselves

3) when a language is retained, a major part of the culture is maintained because the many basic cultural conceptualizations reside in the language

4) When a culture remains in the same locality for long periods of time remembrances of the past are very persistent because of the close association of belief and history to specific geographic phenomena

These same assumptions were necessarily operative in this study. However, there were certain limitations in the reconstruction. These included the difficulty in obtaining data on residence arrangements during various types of subsistence activities, exact settlement patterns across space, detailed accounts of material culture and subsistence activities, and behavior in interpersonal interaction. Most of these limitations I attribute to the fact that residence is no longer in the original locality and that the age and health of both informants did not allow for traversing the former locale of the culture. During a few short trips to the former fish camp area, geographic and historic information was imparted readily. In Bean's (1972:16) terms it was from such a "cultural memory bank" that I drew my data.

The collection of data involved several techniques. Data were collected during interviews with informants, from published anthropological and historical literature, and from notes taken by the previous researcher (Baggen n.d.). The "field method" included the use of interviews, from loosely to highly structured, as well as open-ended interviews and nondirected conversations and personal observation. Much of the data was cross-checked with the two informants although that presented limitations possibly due to kin ties and age. Most field work took place in the separate residences of the informants in Fairbanks and both informants were often together when data were collected. Other field work occurred at recent potlatches in villages where the

informants were invited. Our conversations were in English and although I cannot speak the Salcha dialect, my transcription of many words and phrases was facilitated by the assistance of a linguist who recorded some of that dialect. Both informants frequently converse with each other in their native language. My role as a field worker remained fairly constant throughout the study, being that of a student, recorder, and friend.

Data collection was skewed by circumstances, individuals and a general theoretical guideline. Historical circumstances of the former Salcha band presented limitations in reconstruction of certain aspects of the culture as noted above. In addition, since both informants are female many aspects of the culture peculiar or specific to the male segment of the population were unobtainable (e.g., kin terms). Nonetheless, research was conducted with the assumption that although members of the opposite sex may view, learn and participate in their own culture in very different ways, a general description of the overall pattern can be related by either sex. The theoretical perspectives which guided much of the actual analysis were 1) culture is viewed as a unified whole and 2) cultures adapt to the permissive and limiting roles of the environment. These two orientations provided the general context in which the data were brought together.

CHAPTER 2. ETHNOHISTORY AND THE SALCHA BAND

The ethnohistory of the Salcha people falls within the recorded and unrecored history of interior Alaska and more specifically that of the Tanana Valley. The history of white contact for the people of the Salcha comes from recorded documents and oral tradition. In the future, the archeological record should make a significant contribution. From recorded history as well as oral tradition it is difficult to determine not only when indirect contact began but when an irreversible pattern had been established. In addition, it is necessary to bear in mind that most of that which constitutes even the early historical records was no longer a description of an aboriginal lifeway. Instead, it was a period in which Indians, in obtaining furs and making regular trips to trading posts, had already begun to alter their native subsistence pattern, although a seminomadic life style was still characteristic. Nonetheless, approximate time periods in which this change began can be established from ethnohistoric data. The historical records were produced almost entirely by men whose interests ranged from trading, exploring and Christianizing to military, geographic and geologic reconnaissances. Whatever their motives--doing business with the Indian, determining the potential threat of the native population to United States expansion, or surveying

the land of the newly purchased Alaskan territory--all were male members of a dominant and white culture which by 1910 had alteady made significant alterations in the native life style of the Interior. In the following discussion, data from Salcha oral tradition and from historic documents are used to present the history of contact in the area. Included, too, are population figures and estimates. There are, however, some major problems with the historical documents. It is often unclear exactly which Indians are being described. Observations of Indian populations at certain locales often included members of several bands who were rarely distinguished by their numbers or exact point of origin by the observer/recorder. For example, in noting the presence of a Tanana Indian at some location, any one of at least a dozen bands along the Tanana may have been represented. Most observations of the Indians were made during the summer. Although many Indians were engaged in activities at the fish camp where they were observed, others, no doubt, were elsewhere in the pursuit of large game. Also, the recorders did not always indicate whether they actually observed the Indians they were describing, or derived their information from the oral reports of others.

Pre-1880

Indians in or near the coastal regions had contact with whites, their materials and their ideas prior to those in the Interior. The extent of native trade of many of these items

has not as yet been documented, although the potential for such archeological documentation in the Interior is great. During the 1840's, trading posts at Nulato and Fort Yukon were established in the Interior by the Russians and English respectively. The geographic extent of trade items from these interior posts at that time is unknown. It is possible that aboriginal trade routes for some groups along the Tanana extended to the Yukon River, perhaps anywhere between Tanana and Dawson, in which case some early items of white material culture could be expected to be found in the Tanana Valley. As early as 1851, the human population along the Tanana River was estimated to be 100 by J. Richardson (Hodge 1912:728). During the 1860's, a trading post was established at the mouth of the Tanana and as early as 1861, this location was represented on a Russian map (Brooks 1973:233). It is during this period, too, that one of the first recorded descriptions of "Tanana Indians" is made after their observation at Fort Yukon and at Nuklukayet at the mouth of the Tanana. Dall (1870:108) from his travels in 1866 on the Yukon River described the "Tenan-Kutchin" in relation to whites and how other Indians viewed them:

> They [Tanana Indians] are without doubt the tribe of all others which has had the least to do with the whites. No white man has yet explored the river on which they live...the Tenan-Kutchin are regarded with fear by the adjacent tribes....

During those voyages on the Yukon, Dall (1870:537) estimated the population of the "Tenan-Kutchin" as 400. The senior informant

could only recall one Salcha individual who had visited Fort Yukon and that was probably during the late 1860's.

A few years later in 1869, C.P. Raymond (1900:37-38) described the "Tenan-Kutchin" in the following way when in early spring the Indians descended to the mouth of the Tanana and camped at

> Nuclucayette where they meet the traders and dispose of the furs which they have collected during the winter... they are said to be active, intelligent, and enterprising, but violent and warlike. They live principally by hunting.

Some Salcha people did travel to Nuklukayet at least by the mid-1870's but whether any ventured there in the late 1860's has not been determined. As mentioned above, it is difficult at times to determine whether historic sources are referring to the more upriver or downriver Tanana since, as in the case of Dall (1870) and Raymond (1900) cited above, the sources are reporting, in general, the characteristics of the "Tenan-Kutchin." The senior Salcha informant claims that initial contact with white was at "Valdez" (probably Alaganik) and not at Tanana. However, this statement does not necessarily mean that the Salcha people first traded there but may reflect the importance in the memory of the informant of her father's sister who had made the trip to "Valdez" from Copper Center sometime prior to 1880. Russian abuse of Indian women and other encounters between the Copper River Indians and the Russians, such as Basile's all but friendly relations with the Russians are part of the Salcha oral tradition.

Oral documentation, then, states that the first Indian-white encounters occured at "Valdez," although for most of the Salcha population, encounters and trade during this time probably occurred at Nuklukayet. Later (before the turn of the century), however, it was stated that some Salcha men did journey to "Valdez" to trade, although I could not determine precisely when.

During the 1870's, some fur traders, Harper and McQuesten were the first known white men to enter the Tanana River Valley (McKennan 1969:95). The Indian life style during this decade probably remained much the same as that of the previous one. Lower river bands were engaged in trapping for trade and had incorporated the spring trading activities into their seminomadic annual cycle. Salcha people probably had similarly altered their life style at this time as well in order to trade for items of white material culture. In 1874, M. Mercier established a trading post at Belle Isle (Eagle) (Orth 1967:291) and according to the senior informant Salcha men and women went there to trade. During 1875, a trading station 75 miles up from the mouth of the Tanana was established (McQuesten 1952:6). This post remained in operation by a Mr. Bean for only a few years due, no doubt, to the murder of his wife. One Salcha oral tradition indicates that Indians continued to trade there and people from as far away as Northway traded there, although it was apparently no longer under Bean's supervision. This particular tradition

also tells that the Indian murderer of Bean's wife had not received very complimentary remarks concerning his appearance when he went into the store. Intending to kill the trader himself, the killer missed and shot the man's wife. Bean did not have a good reputation as a trader and was described as "cheap."

Petroff (1884:161), in his tenth census of the United States, recorded with an accompanying drawing for the year 1880 the first two Tanana Indians to visit the sea coast. In the same report, we find that during the late 1870's, the inhabitants of the Tanana presented much the same image to white observers as they had during the previous decade, although their life style had altered. During that time, too, he (Petroff 1884:161) recorded that upriver Indians traded at Nuklukayet:

> The Tennankutchin (Mountain Men), or Tennan-tnu-Kokhtanan (Mountain River Men) as they are called by the Tinnats, occupy the mountainous basin of the Tanana River. But few whites have penetrated into their domain, as they have always borne the character of a treacherous and warlike tribe. They number, perhaps, seven or eight hundred, living chiefly in villages near the head waters of the river, which they descend during the summer in birch-bark canoes to trade on the neutral ground of Nuklukaiet....

According to the map accompanying that report, these villages were located from approximately Mansfield Village to the headwaters of the Tanana.

1880-1890.

In 1883, F. Schwatka in a reconnaissance of the Yukon River encountered "Tanana Indians" above and below the present-day town

of Eagle and at Nuklukayet. Unlike recorders before him, Schwatka (1900:346-347) described them less generally. He included descriptions of their country, habitations, reputation, resources, and friendliness towards whites.

> This tribe [Tanana] lives all along the river and has generally had the reputation of being very warlike and in every way adverse to civilizing influences...their country being mountainous and their life being one of activity, being passed for the most part in hunting game... these Indians rarely possess more in the way of useful articles than what they carry with them...Their habitations, except among the Indians living near the mouth, are very temporary, being made of moose skins in the winter and generally of a lighter or less substantial character in the summer...The principal game found along this river is moose, caribou, and mountain sheep which, besides the salmon and whitefish caught in considerable quantities in the stream, furnish those Indians in reality their only food, for were these cut off they would not be able to exist. There are few edible roots or berries found... Very little flour or other plain articles of food are bought of traders, chiefly, no doubt, on account of the difficulty in transporting it home...The trader who lives among them speaks of them as friendly toward the whites and the Indians living in the neighborhood.

At this time it is likely that Salcha trade at Eagle was on a regular basis as it was at Nuklukayet and later at Circle. Schwatka (1900:346) estimated the Tanana River population to be 300 or 700, but suggested on the basis of reports he had received that it was closer to 500.

In the summer of 1885, Lieutenant H.T. Allen, on a military reconnaissance, was the first man to encounter the Tanana Indians in their own country and recorded this venture. Beginning upriver he stayed with Indians at Nandell's (Last Tetlin) and Kheeltat's (Mansfield Village). Without native guide, he ventured from Kheeltat's

to the mouth of the Tanana. Between Mansfield and his encounter with Ivan's group near the Toklat River, he (1900:451) saw few signs of natives and counted only 16 people. Upon entering the Salcha-Goodpaster area he (1900:450) observed at the "Goodpaster River" (actually Volkmar on current maps) "a deserted fishing station and canoes" while 4 miles below the "Volkmar" (now Goodpaster) River some 25 miles distant, he recorded seeing "three houses, one of which was probably used as a winter home. All were unoccupied. Here were graves with cotton cloths, the first monuments of this type we had seen" (Allen 1900:450). Making camp near Delta Creek, he saw two women and a girl in tents who were "the first natives who spoke of the river by the name Tananah" (Allen 1900:450). Two miles below, he observed two unoccupied houses, the nature of which was not described. Around the Chena River he (1900:451) observed unoccupied fishing stations. Allen (1900:477) estimated the Indian population to be between 550 and 600 for the Tanana and its tributaries although the total number of Indians he observed was 232. The estimated figure then is about twice that actually observed. It is not known on what basis he projected from the observed to the estimated.

There are, however, several factors responsible for the actual number of people Allen observed. Looking more closely at Allen's report for the Tanana from Tetlin to Nuklukayet (at the mouth of the river) these factors become apparent. At Kheeltat's Village (Mansfield/Dixthada) Allen (1900:448) observed 28 men,

18 women and 6 children and had been informed by Nandell (from Last Tetlin) that many people at Kheeltat's had died. Guedon (1971:12) suggests that the disproportionate number of men is due to the fact that they had heard of Allen's coming and had assembled at Mansfield. Hence, the figure is perhaps low in terms of the previous population but probably high in terms of the number of people actually inhabiting Mansfield during Allen's visit.

After leaving Mansfield, unaccompanied by native guide, Allen soon entered the area utilized by the Salcha and Goodpaster Indians. Along that portion of the river there were few signs of habitation and, as noted earlier, even fewer Indians observed. Since Allen was traveling in mid-June it is not surprising that he found no inhabitants at the junctions of the Goodpaster and Volkmar rivers. The salmon usually would not have ascended the Tanana at that early a date, nor do they presently ascend beyond the Goodpaster River (something which Allen suggested in 1885 [1900:450]). In addition, informants noted that Salcha and Goodpaster king salmon fishing stations were not usually located at the exact junction of the silt-laden Tanana and the clearwater streams, but rather up the clearwater streams, a suggestion also made by Rainey (1939:372). It is difficult to estimate the number of people who inhabited the three houses Allen observed near the Goodpaster. At Last Tetlin, Allen (1900:477) observed 80 individuals (34 men, 28 women, 18

children) and 4 houses and at Tetlin, 17 individuals (6 men, 4 women, 7 children) and 2 houses. It is only in the second instance that Allen indicates that the reported number of people in fact occupied the houses. Whatever the population, it had been decimated by recent deaths of an unknown nature near Goodpaster, evidenced by the cotton-covered graves. No description is made of the two women, the girl and the two unoccupied houses Allen observed near Delta Creek. He did not see another native until almost reaching the Nenana River some 100 miles from Delta Creek. He (1900:451) had, however, seen the largest house on the Tanana somewhere beyond the mouth of the Chena River. Upon reaching the encampment near the Nenana he (Ibid.) reported "two small tents...the occupants...rushed to the brush. An old man, woman, and two children remained." How many went into the brush is not reported, although in a later statement, Allen (1900:477) estimated that the population of that camp and the one at Delta Creek each contained 8 people. Another group on the lower reaches of the Tanana which Allen (1900:451) observed was composed of 75 persons (35 men, 20 women, 20 children). Most of the 232 Indians Allen observed were near the mouth of the Tanana or approaching its headwaters. Had Nandell not taken Allen to Kheeltat's, the recorded population would be less still and had Allen had a native guide along the rest of the Tanana, it is possible that he would have been taken to encampments at Healy Lake, Salcha and/or Chena, all of which

had Indian inhabitants at that time. There remains no Salcha oral tradition concerning Allen's trip along the Tanana.

In 1887, when McQuesten established a trading post at Circle (Orth 1967:219), the Salcha Indians began regular trade there. Oral tradition states that fur prices were better at Circle than at Tanana, hence preference for Circle although trade also continued at Nuklukayet.

It is in the early 1880's that McKennan (1969:314) places the beginning of white contact for the Upper Tanana Indians and the regular trading at the Yukon River posts. In the 1887 report of the Governor of Alaska, A.P. Swineford (1887:47) reported a conversation with the son of a Yukon chief who provided information on Tanana trading and population decrease:

> Q. Do you trade much in furs where you live?
> A. Yes; they trade a great many, but the furs come from Tananah River.
> Q. Is it a large river? A. Yes; like the Yukon.
> Q. Are there many people living on it? A. Yes' but a great many are dying.
> Q. What is the matter? A. There seems to be a kind of epidemic. There a few people now, though there used to be a great many.

For the Salcha, white contact was probably well established in the early 1880's although regular trading for some was undertaken at the mouth of the Tanana and at Eagle in the previous decade.

1890-1900

At the time of the eleventh census of 1890, Greenfield (1893:126) reported the presence of "16 persons in a band on Birch Lake." This was probably a group of Salcha Indians as this

area was frequently utilized by the band at that time. The group at Mansfield was composed of 73 individuals. In the upper river settlements it was then recorded that the population was 203 (109 males, 94 females) and 373 for the entire Tanana (Hodge 1912:728).

The later years of this decade produced more recorded data for the Tanana and, for the first time, the Salcha River. In the summer of 1898, A.H. Brooks accompanied by W.J. Peters set out to make a geographical and geological reconnaissance of the Tanana and White River basins. During that survey, Brooks (1900:491) encountered Indians of both the Salcha and Goodpaster bands in those areas:

> Several Indian houses are found on and near the Tanana between the Goodpaster [Volkmar] and Salchaket....They have communication with the Yukon through the broad flat valleys of the northern tributaries of the Tanana. At the mouth of the Volkmar [Goodpaster] there are two substantial cabins which are supplied with many of the products of civilization.

Peters and Brooks (1899:74) did not find the Tanana Indians to be treacherous and warlike as they were formerly described:

> ...The Indians of the Tanana compare very favorably with the other Indians of the interior. They are kindly, peaceful people, whose skill at certain crude handicrafts has long been known, and so far as our information goes they are trustworthy and reliable.

A packtrain route from Circle to the Tanana was also established during that summer "by way of Birch Creek' this trail reaches the Tanana near the Salchacket River" (Peters and Brooks 1899:74).

It is clear that at that time trade was taking place at Circle by the Salcha and Goodpaster Indians with items of trade clearly a part of their household paraphernalia. Brooks (1900:492) also noted that nearly everyone used rifles instead of the traditional bow and arrow. Informants' statements for this time and earlier indicate such trading activity at Circle--an area in which one informant's "great grandmother" is said to have come from. The senior informant recalled that the technique of smoking mooseskin was learned at Circle during this time. In addition, it was during the survey of Brooks (1900:451) that the Indian name of Salchaket, i.e., "mouth of the Salcha" was reported and the Salcha River was placed on a published map for the first time. Brooks (1900:493) estimated that the Indian population of the Tanana was less than 400.

In late September of 1898, J.C. Castner encountered Salcha and Goodpaster Indians who, according to his own reports as well as oral tradition, saved him from starvation. His purpose in the area was to find an overland route from the Tanana to the Yukon River. In that attempt, he (1900:692) engaged Volkmar (Goodpaster) , Salcha, and Chena Indian guides. On August 29, where the Delta River enters the Tanana he observed a good trail and four miles above that point he saw "Indian cabins" (Castner 1900:689). By September 25, he had found no trails on either side of the Volkmar (Goodpaster) River and no route to the Yukon from that point. About one-half mile from the Volkmar

(Goodpaster) he heard an axe. There he found a woman fixing a birch bark canoe and five men came running, one of whom had learned some English at Circle (Castner 1900:692). There three men agreed to take him down the Tanana (to Salcha). At Salcha, four Indians joined his party which then went up the Chena River and over to Circle (on the Yukon River). At Circle, he also learned of another overland route from the Tanana to Circle from the headwaters of the Salcha River. The largest village he (1900:693) observed during his Tanana expedition contained 20 cabins which were located near the present town of Nenana. Twelve years after the reconnaissance of Lt. Allen, Castner (1900:703,706) found the population of the Tanana and Yukon rivers to be quite different:

> The last fifteen years have witnessed a great reduction in the number of Alaskan Indians and a great change in those who survive. Of the hundreds Lieutenants Allen and Schwatka report along the Tanana and Yukon, I saw a few small families only. There have been a great number of deaths within the last few years among the Yukon and Tanana Indians...We found small families of Indians on the Tanana where Lieutenant Allen saw hundreds. They proved to be the most prosperous Indians we had met...They trade directly with the whites and get better things than the Matanuskas...On the 750 miles of the Tanana proper and its tributaries I saw 7 small hamlets, and not to exceed 100 Indians--men, women, and children.

Most of the Tanana Indians observed by Castner were not in the same area where Allen made his observations. At the time of year that Castner made his observations, many of the Indians who were members of the bands actually observed by Castner were probably

elsewhere in the pursuit of game. Nonetheless, evidence of epidemics among the Yukon River population in the 1860's to 1890's (Dall 1870; Swineford 1887; Schwatka 1900), for example, suggests that some of the Tanana Indians may have suffered from those recorded or other unrecorded epidemics. Castner (1900: 706) was told that there had been numerous deaths during the late 1890's and also noted that there were many sick people, suffering mostly from "bronchial" diseases. Castner (1900:692) also notes how Allen bypassed the Salcha and the Indian residents there:

> I succeeded in engaging three of them to go down the river in birch-bark canoes to an Indian camp 100 miles below...at the mouth of the Salchucket, a large river hitherto a stranger on the map...Lt. Allen failed to see the mouth of this river when he came down the Tanana, as he went down the main river and through Bates Rapids, which the slough avoids. It is up this stream that the Volkmer [Goodpaster] and Salchucket Indians go to Birch Creek and Circle City.

Like Brooks, Castner (1900:706) spoke well of those Tanana Indians:

> Their friendship for white people is great and we owe our lives to their kindness...We were the first whites to visit their home. Their hospitality was the greatest I ever saw. It was the same at the village at the mouth of the Salchucket and again at the mouth of the Chena.

In that same year (1898), prospectors were at the headwaters of the Salcha, guided there by a Birch Creek Indian (McManus 1900: 751). It was determined at that time that the best trail to the Tanana from Circle would be from the south fork of Birch Creek to the headwaters of the Salcha and down that river to the Tanana (McManus 1900:751). Still at the end of that decade, McManus

(1900:752) said that no trading posts had been established on the Tanana beyond the mouth. This suggests that the trading post established some 20 to 25 years earlier by Bean 75 miles upriver from the mouth of the Tanana, had probably been abandoned by this time. From 1898 on, white involvement and travel in the Salcha region became more intense.

In mid-July, 1899, J.F. Rice (1900:786), on an expedition from Valdez to Eagle, observed 50 Ketchumstuk Indians at Lake Mansfield and on August 3, 1899, C.E. Griffiths (1900:726) reported 65 inhabitants at the same locale and had been told that many Indians had died. Such figures reveal the fluctuation of populations in a short period of time and perhaps indicate a feature which occurred among native groups elsewhere on the Tanana.

Trade at Circle by Indians on the Tanana was engaged in on a regular basis in the 1890's. Trails led up both the Salcha and Chena rivers to Birch Creek and thence to Circle. Natives' and explorers' accounts indicate that Salcha Indians, specifically, were trading there and numerous items resulting from that trade were observed by Brooks on the Tanana.

Trade at Nuklukayet, however, continued. The senior informant, born in the mid-1880's, made her first trip to Nuklukayet with her parents when she was about 7 years old:

> ...Traded moosehide, beaver, fur, fox, mink. They just make even with the trader. No pay but give you food, cloth. The traders, storeman, they pay you for your

> trip. Not for fur, but for trip. Poor Indians walk long way to bring fur so they pay them.

Such reports from 1885 to 1900 are evidence that the natives of the Tanana River, and indeed the Salcha people themselves, were contacted in their own area by whites during this time. The population of the Tanana River from 1851 until the turn of the century has been based on estimates determined from statements by travelers to the area, Indians, and hear-say, projected estimates from Indians actually observed on the Tanana or Yukon rivers and actual observation. Tables 1-3 below summarize those figures. The human population of the Tanana has been variously estimated as between 100 and 700 during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The actual number of individuals observed prior to the twentieth century was 232 in 1885 and 373 in 1890 and no more than 100 in 1898. Perhaps the most reliable figure is that recorded by Greenfield (1893) in the eleventh census, since travel and observation were specifically for the purpose of obtaining demographic data for the area. These population figures are tenuous. None of the figures recorded during this period can be taken as absolute and no recorder indicated how such terms as "village" and "band" were used. Numbers of persons recorded represents merely one point in time and also present other problems. For example, an individual counted as part of the Birch Lake group may not in fact have been affiliated with that group--likewise for Mansfield or any other locale. The figures for Salcha, Goodpaster and Chena

Table 1. Human Population Estimates for the Tanana River Area

Year	Estimate	Source
1851	100	Richardson (Hodge 1912)
1867	400	Dall (1870)
1880	700	Petroff (1884)
1883	500	Schwatka (1900)
1885	550-600	Allen (1900)
1890	373	Greenfield (1893)
1898	100	Castner (1900)
1898	400	Brooks (1900)

Table 2. Human Population Record for the Tanana from Mansfield to Chena

Year	Locale	Total	Source
1890	Birch Lake	16	Greenfield (1893)
1899	Mansfield	65	Griffiths (1900)
1899	Mansfield	50	Rice (1900)
ca. 1900	Salcha	33	Andrews (field notes)
ca. 1900	Goodpaster	30	Baggen (n.d.)
ca. 1900	Chena	33	Baggen (n.d.)

Table 3. Population Observations for Specific Locales in the Tanana River Area

Year	Locale	Men	Women	Children	Total	Source
1885	Kheeltat's (Mansfield)	28	18	6	52	Allen (1900)
1885	Last Tetlin	34	28	18	80	Allen (1900)
1885	Tetlin	6	4	7	17	Allen (1900)
1885	Delta Creek	(5)*	2	1	3 (8)*	Allen (1900)
1885	Chena area				8	Allen (1900)
1885	Ivan's group	35	20	20	75	Allen (1900)
Total		108	72	52	240	

*Allen did not in fact see this total number of individuals but later recorded that he saw only two camps between Kheeltat's and the Nenana River, each containing 8 persons (Allen 1900:477).

in Table 2 are based on reconstruction from my own data as well as Baggen's (n.d.) and are not absolute either--only approximations. Some individuals resided at Goodpaster and then later married into the Salcha group and still later moved to Chena, Healy Lake, or to Mansfield. The year 1900 is also approximate.

1900-1910

The beginning of this decade was marked by the discovery of gold north of Fairbanks in 1902 (Orth 1967:324). Prospectors soon followed. In 1902, the U.S. Army Signal Corps established a telegraph station three miles from the mouth of the Salcha and another in 1904 at Big Delta (Orth 1967:95,130). However, as late as 1903, Mitchell (1904:59) reported that "no mining has been carried on between Tanana Crossing and Chena to speak of" and in this same area he estimated no more than 20 Indian families. Oral tradition coincides with his estimate.

Soon, traders began to establish posts along the Tanana. In 1903, a post was established at Nenana (Olson 1968:129), and, based on my data, by 1904 Munson's Roadhouse was in business near the Salcha fish camp. Therefore, the Salcha people had a market for furs, skins, fish and meat in their immediate locale and, at the same time, had more direct access to white materials, food items, and ideas. It would appear that after the establishment of Munson's Roadhouse, it was advantageous for the Indians to

trade there directly. During that time, one informant had been temporarily residing at Goodpaster with her husband, and they could easily have permanently established their residence there. They later went to Salcha and remained there. The junior informant added that it was not to one's advantage to stay at Goodpaster because of the Goodpaster chief who would sequester the furs, whereas at Salcha, individuals could sell furs themselves. Although it is unknown what actually prompted a Salcha residence for the informant, it is clear that direct trade was advantageous to the individual. The presence of the trading post probably altered the Salcha yearly cycle to some extent, although the annual cycle data indicate that mobility still characterized their annual pattern. It was during the second half of the decade that the more significant changes took place for the Salcha. By the middle of that decade, the white people were living side-by-side with the Salcha people in their homeland and had established communication centers. The most direct contact had just begun.

By 1908, Fairbanks was well established as a city with "macademized thoroughfares, big business blocks, up to date stores...There are churches of all denominations, two large farily equipped hospitals, three banks, two daily newspapers, a school...a water system" (Meaker 1908:440). Only ten years earlier, there were few whites in the area and no white establishments along the entire length of the Tanana. By 1908,

Salcha Indians were also making trips to Fairbanks to sell furs and skins and, at the same time, the Salcha had been exposed to the missionary influence of the Episcopal mission that served the entire Tanana Valley. In the summer of 1909, a mission was built at Salcha near Munson's Roadhouse. It opened in October of that year with a resident missionary/teacher/nurse--Margaret Wightman (Anon. 1909:12). At that time, too, families were given windows and doors when they built single-family dwellings (Betticher 1911:12). The Reverend C.E. Betticher, Jr., minister for the Tanana Valley, made periodic visits to the mission. The Indians were still seminomadic at that time as evidenced in his "Report 1909-1910" (Betticher 1910:58):

> Along its [Tanana River] banks the native people are scattered; here a few and there a rew, called hither and thither in pursuit of game, camping for a few weeks at a time during the run of fish, now appearing at one point, now at another, a restless, wandering people, who look upon the river as their very life.

1910-1920

The Salcha and Goodpaster people began to congregate at Salcha between 1910 and 1911. Chief Jarvis of Goodpaster told his people to move to Salcha: "Then Jarvis, chief of whole village says, 'You all move down to Saachaege.' So they all move to Saachaege to make big village there." The 1900 population of Goodpaster of about 30 (Baggen n.d.:3) had already been split by moves and marriages to Chena Village and Healy Lake. Some stayed in the area during this decade and some women married

white men (Solka 1970) and certainly some had died. Similarly, the Salcha population of about 33 had been decimated by death due to various causes and, in the fall of 1911, only 40 natives (Goodpaster and Salcha) were recorded at Salcha (Grider 1911:9). During this decade (1910-1920) the Salcha people were ministered to by two resident missionaries. There was no resident missionary at Salcha for two years from August 1916 to August 1918. Still, by 1919, the Salcha people maintained a subsistence life style, subject to fluctuation with the natural and cultural environment:

> I wish they were a more mirthful people, but life for them is no joke. The matter of getting a living is a serious problem. Just now all are busy making fish wheels and traps. If the canneries on the lower river do not stop the run, if the water is not too high, if the rains do not interfere with the curing process, if the sand storms do not come and spoil the half-cured fish, they hope for a prosperous season (Jackson 1919:115).

However, by this time, the more extensive hunting trips to areas as far as Wood River and the Little Delta River and Dry Creek headwaters were no longer made and game was principally sought in the Salcha and Little Salcha River drainages. According to my informants, throughout this and the following period many children died, especially of tuberculosis. Women had numerous children and few survived. One informant had 15 children of whom only 3 survived; 2 of the survivors had white fathers. The other informant had 11 children, 4 of whom have survived. Her first child was born in 1921.

1920-Present

> In January of this year [1920] the mission at Salcha was closed, due to an emergency, and in the present stringent times it is thought necessary to discontinue the work of the resident missionary. The population, like that of Chena, is very small (Rowe 1920:88).

The "emergency," according to oral tradition, was that the resident missionary, Effie Jackson, had broken her arm and could not take care of herself. The broken arm is said to have been the result of the woman's attempt to settle a dispute involving a local shaman after which he wished her a catastrophe--she slipped on some ice and broke her arm. By the 1920's, the Richardson wagon road between Fairbanks and Valdez had been established (Brooks 1973:426). According to my data, the population of Salcha during that time did not exceed 25 persons. By 1945, only two Salcha people were living at Salcha and the only other members of the former Salcha band were their 4 children in boarding schools at Nenana and Eklutna. Everyone else had died. The causes of death for some adults, according to one informant, were numerous: tuberculosis (4), drowning (1), influenza (1), hemorrhage (1), kidney infection (1), fire (1), eaten by a medicine man (1), old age (1). Only half of these deaths occurred in the Salcha area, while others occurred at either Healy Lake or Tanacross.

Summary

Prior to 1880, white contact with the Salcha Indians was mostly indirect. Some items of white manufacture were obtained

in trade at Tanana and Eagle. There is no evidence for the numbers of Salcha Indians who actually engaged in such trade during the annual cycle.

Although the entry of whites and their goods was sometime earlier, direct contact with most of the Salcha people was not until the 1880's. Regular trading trips were made to Tanana and Eagle and to the trading post which was established in the previous decade 75 miles from the mouth of the Tanana as well as to Circle in the late 1880's. Men, women, and children often made those trips and each woman maintained accounts for her furs separate from her husband's. Spring trading trips and the acquisition of furs for trade had made alterations in the annual cycle. In addition, the acquisition of certain material items such as rifles and binoculars had also made the alteration even more pronounced. The annual cycle, however, remained seminomadic. Most of the Indians which Allen observed on a military reconnaissance in 1885 along the Tanana River were near the headwaters and the mouth of the Tanana.

The decade from 1890-1900 was much the same as the previous one. While trade continued at Tanana, Circle, and Eagle, settlements by whites in the area were almost non-existent. With the exception of 16 persons observed at Birch Lake by Greenfield for the eleventh U.S. census, the only recorded descriptions of the Salcha and Goodpaster Indians were made by Peters and

Brooks on a geographical and geological reconnaissance in 1898 along the Tanana and during Castner's attempt to find an overland route from the Tanana River to the Yukon River in that same year. None of these men remained long in the Salcha-Goodpaster area.

The decade from 1900-1910, marked by the discovery of gold near Fairbanks in 1902, signifies the onset of close and continuous contact for the Salcha Indians. With the establishment of a roadhouse at Salcha in 1904 and the Episcopal mission in 1909, as well as the development of the city of Fairbanks, the Salcha Indians had a market for furs in the immediate vicinity and access and exposure to a wealth of white materials, food items, and ideas. In the years following the establishment of the mission in 1909 and the construction of log nuclear family dwellings at the same time, a more sedentary life style was adopted although missionaries still spoke of the frequent mobility of the Salcha people. Population decrease was most notable in the few numbers of children who survived.

In 1920, the Episcopal mission at Salcha closed. In the following decades, most of the Salcha Indians died while the few survivors moved to Tanacross or Healy Lake. Only the two informants and their immediate families remained at Salcha. During the early 1950's, these two women moved from Salcha to Fairbanks.

Salcha culture, as recorded here, does not represent the aboriginal culture, but, rather, the culture at the turn of this

century--a culture which had changed due to the initial contact prior to the establishment of the mission at Salcha in 1909 (cf. "Contact-Traditional Stage," Helm et al. n.d.). The initial contact period included not only changes in the subsistence pattern, but also changes in the sociopolitical, technoeconomic, and ideological systems of the Salcha culture. Today only two full-blooded Salcha Indians survive and these two women, according to their own statements and others, are the only individuals who know about and lived Saachaege--the way of life of the Salcha band.

CHAPTER 3. ENVIRONMENT AND ANNUAL CYCLE

During the annual cycle of the Salcha Indians, important floral and faunal resources were utilized in several ecosystems. A brief description of each of the ecosystems in which resources were exploited is presented, focusing on those resources which were nost important to the Indians in terms of subsistence and raw materials. The annual subsistence cycle of the Salcha is then described. A comparative examination of the annual cycle of some other neighboring bands brings to light the similarities and differences in subsistence emphasis by those bands.

Location

The Salcha River area is located in the subarctic boreal forest of Alaska. The river itself flows southwest 125 miles to the Tanana River, one of the main tributaries of the Yukon River. The Salcha River is a major clearwater tributary of the Tanana. The following describes the maximum habitat of the Salcha Indians--the area of exploitation from which this band of people made their livelihood. This area falls between W146°00 and W147°30' longitude and N64°00-N64°30' latitude. As noted elsehwere (Chapter 5), not all individuals occupied or utilized all of this area. However, during the annual cycle they all exploited several different ecological zones throughout the year.

Geography

The Tanana River Valley itself extends some 400 miles. The area has several well developed drainage systems, including the Salcha and Goodpaster rivers, and drains an area of about 25,000 square miles. Clearwater streams flow from the numerous lakes into the silt-laden Tanana as do the larger clearwater rivers such as the Little Salcha, Salcha and Goodpaster which all flow from the north. These larger tributaries are well forested. The Tanana Valley with its streams, valleys and broad lowlands is "diversified by scattered mountain masses and isolated peaks that rise above the general level" of 1000 to 2000 feet (Brooks 1900:36). Although most of the area is less than 1000 feet, ridges of 2000 to 6000 feet seem to dominate and merge into the valleys of the Tanana and its tributaries (Wahrhaftig 1965:24). The Valley is often thought of geographically in terms of three provinces, first outlined by Brooks (1905:83) during his geographical and geological survey of Alaska in 1898:

1. the broad lowland near the head of the "upper Tanana"
2. the constricted part of the valley between the Tetlin and Delta rivers termed the "middle Tanana"
3. the broad portion between the Delta and the mouth of the Tanana termed the "lower Tanana"

Most of the area falls in the Central Plateau Region (Brooks 1900) or the Intermontane Plateau of the Northern Plateau and the Intermontane Plateau of the Western Alaska provinces (Wahrhaftig 1965). More specifically, the area is composed of several physiographic divisions. Three of these divisions were important

to the Salcha in the food quest and in providing raw materials: the Yukon-Tanana Upland, the Tanana-Kuskokwim Lowland and the Northern Foothills (Wahrhaftig 1965:24,29,35). The Yukon-Tanana Upland is predominantly unglaciated and characterized by "rounded even-topped ridges with gentle side slopes" (Wahrhaftig 1965:24) a feature immediately apparent to any air traveler. The few lakes are located in the valley floors and low passes. Contrasting with this upland is the Tanana-Kuskokwim Lowland, the broad depression bordered on the south by the Alaska Range and drained in the central and eastern portions by the Tanana (Wahrhaftig 1965:29). The unglaciated Northern Foothills of the Alaska Range vary in altitude from 2000 to 4500 feet. These flat-topped eastward trending ridges produce a three to seven mile wide belt on the north side of the Alaska Range and descend into the Tanana-Kuskokwim Lowland (Wahrhaftig 1965:35).

Climate

The area exhibits a continental subarctic climate, characterized by extremes in temperature and low annual precipitation.

Annual Precipitation (in.)			Annual Temperature (°F.)		
Max.	Min.	Avg.	Max.	Min.	Avg.
24	10	15	100	-75	15-25

(Major Ecosystems of Alaska 1973)

Ecosystems

The maximum area exploited by the Salcha contains six ecosystems (Fig. 2). Some of the flora and fauna were important in postcontact times for subsistence while others such as crows, owls, and loons were important in the ideological system. The classifications below are derived from Major Ecosystems of Alaska (1973).

Bottomland Spruce-Poplar Forest. This is primarily a white spruce (Picea glauca) forest with balsam poplar (Populus balsamifera) called "cottonwood" by the Indians. The plant environment also exhibits willow (Salix sp.), rose (Rosa acicularis), Labrador tea (Ledum palustre), cranberry (Vaccinium vitis-idaea), blueberry (Vaccinium caespitosum), wild rhubarb (Polygonum alaskanum), currant (Ribes triste), fireweed (Epilobium angustifolium), lichens, moss (Sphagnum sp.). The faunal environment contains beaver (Castor canadensis), ground squirrel (Spermophilus undulatus), land otter (Lutra canadensis), lynx (Lynx canadensis), marten (Martes americana), mink (Mustela vison), moose (Alces alces gigas), snowshoe hare (Lepus americanus), weasel (Mustela erminea), and wolverine (Gulo gulo). Birds prevalent are the spruce grouse (Canachites canadensis), crow (Corvus corax), and the woodland owls (Bubo virginianus, Strix nebulosa). As shown in Fig. 2, this area borders the Tanana and its major tributaries. The Salcha people were in or near this ecosystem much of the year. Clearly, this is a good

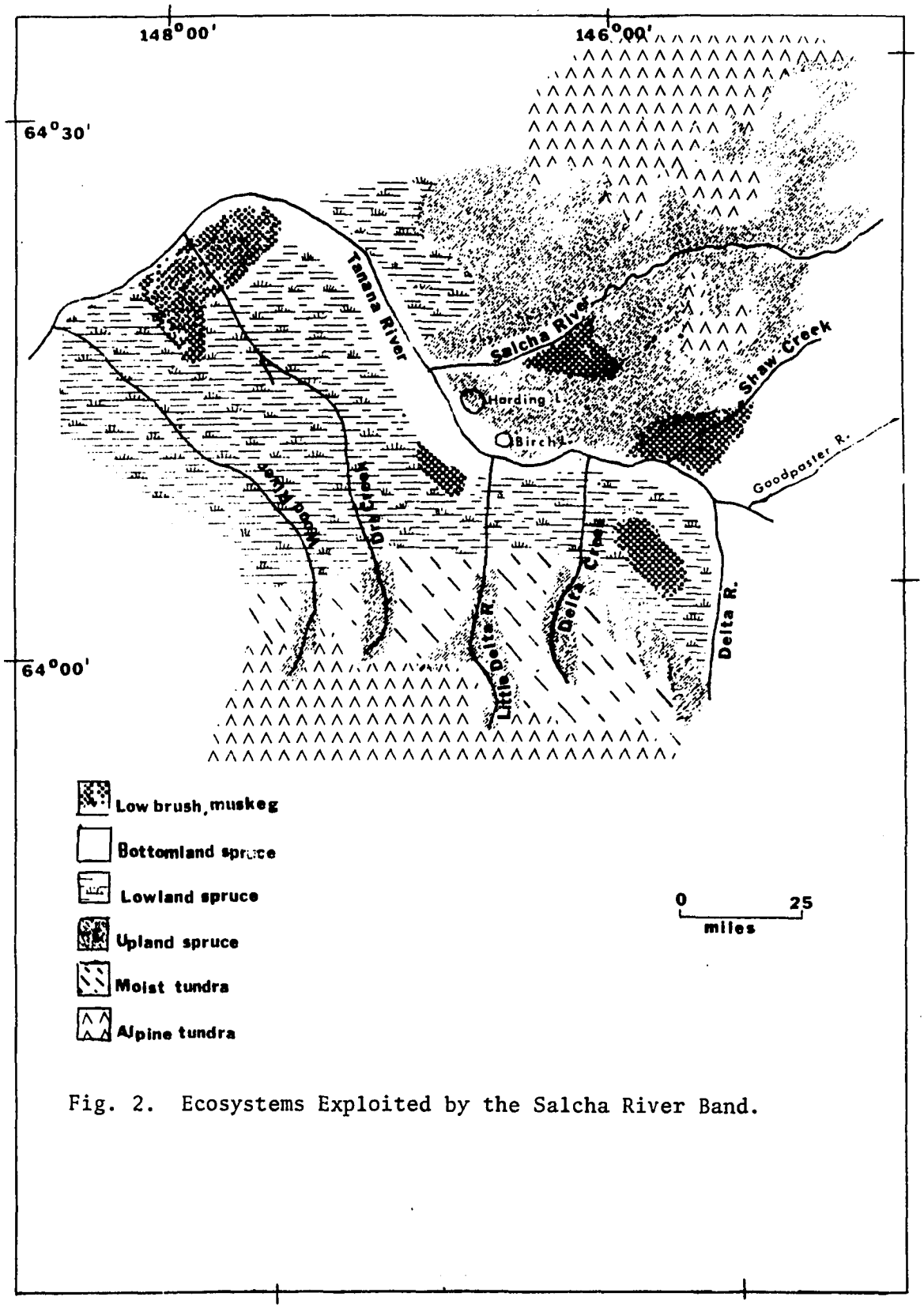


Fig. 2. Ecosystems Exploited by the Salcha River Band.

habitat for fur-bearers which became more important during the fur trade period. Prior to this, their utilization was limited to starvation periods with the exception of beaver. Moose concentrate in this area (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973: 95B), and it is also a good nesting and molting area for waterfowl (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat:95E) often secured by the Indians from May to September.

Lowland Spruce Forest. Vegetation composing this ecosystem includes the black spruce (Picea mariana), white spruce, aspen (Populus tremuloides), paper birch (Betula papyrifera). The shrub characteristic in this zone is the willow. Fruit-bearing plants are the lowbush cranberry, blueberry, crowberry (Empetrum nigrum hermaphroditum) and the bearberry (Arctostaphylos alpina). Included here, too, are the numerous lichens and thick covers of mosses. The faunal environment includes the black bear (Ursus americanus), caribou (Rangifer tarandus), lynx, moose, red fox (Vulpes fulva), snowshoe hare, wolf (Canis lupus), and wolverine. Birds are the sharptail grouse (Pedioecetes phasianellos), willow ptarmigan (Lagopus lagopus), owl and crow.

Procurement of spruce, birch and willow for raw materials and fuel was extensive in this zone. This zone was occupied marginally throughout most of the summer (mid-May through mid-September). Plant material in this ecosystem was critical not only for summer fish procurement devices such as traps, weirs, and dip nets, but also for devices used at other times

of the year such as toboggans, sleds and snowshoes. Other plant foods such as the cranberry could be stored for future use and in postcontact years blueberries were often mixed with grease and stored. In some areas, the open tree stands with lichens are an excellent winter range for caribou sheltering and a good browsing area for moose which range throughout the entire lowland spruce area (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973: 95B). This area too is a nesting and molting area for waterfowl and seabirds.

Low Brush, Muskeg, Bog. The plant environment of this ecosystem is typified by willow, lowbush cranberry, blueberry and bog cranberry (Oxcoccus microcarpus). This area is within the range for black bear, wolf, wolverine, moose, beaver, red fox, mink, weasel, muskrat, and land otter. Birds found in this area include the grouse, ptarmigan, crow, duck and goose almost all of which were important in the subsistence or ideology of the Salcha. Willows and berries were important in the spring and summer months while fur-bearers and large game were more important at other times of the year.

Upland Spruce. This dense forest of the interior is comprised of white and black spruce, birch, balsam poplar, and aspen on the northern slopes. Common, too, are willow, alder (Alnus crispa), rose, highbush cranberry (Viburnum edule), lowbush cranberry, raspberry (Rubus idaeus), currant. Animals characteristic of this area are the black bear and grizzly bear

(Ursus arctos), wolf, wolverine, caribou, moose, snowshoe hare, red fox, lynx, weasel, marten. Common birds are ptarmigan, spruce grouse and crow.

Of the trees, the spruce and birch were utilized by the Salcha people while the willow shrub was also extremely useful. All berries in this ecosystem were probably taken, although the lowbush cranberry was the only one actively sought and taken in quantity and stored for future use.

Caribou, moose, and hare were critical to native livelihood, although the black bear was sought for its hide and fat. As in other ecosystems, the fur-bearers became important with the onset of the fur trade. Other animals such as wolverine, fox, crow, and marten were important in the ideological system. Ptarmigan, grouse and hare provided food at any time of the year. The quantity taken often depended not only on their own availability but also the extent to which other food sources such as moose and caribou were or were not available. The remote Upland Spruce ecosystem near the headwaters of Dry and Delta creeks is a moose concentration area in both the fall and the winter (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973:66B) and probably was in the past. This particular area was occupied by one informant and her family along with some Goodpaster people during the winter.

Moist Tundra. The plant environment of this ecosystem included Labrador tea, blueberries and dwarf shrubs. The plant environment of this area probably contributed little to subsistence

except indirectly in their contribution to the fauna of the area. This area was more important to the Indians during transient periods to the more mountainous areas for sheep and caribou in the fall. Animals present there are the brown and black bears, wolf, hare, red fox, moose and caribou. Caribou calving and summer range also falls into this ecosystem. Ptarmigan which inhabit this area were, no doubt, a source of food at times.

Alpine. Edible plants in this ecosystem, like that in the Moist Tundra were most likely taken, if at all, during the fall hunts. The presence of dwarf birch and willow, however, could provide fuel at any time of the year and this vegetation for larger game was important even though regeneration is slow. Although containing bears and wolves, the sheep and caribou population in this ecosystem at the headwaters of Dry Creek and Little Delta River were most important to Salcha subsistence. The numerous mineral licks in this area attracted caribou as well as sheep.

Rivers. Rivers in the area are important for the fish they contain, the waterfowl they attract, and the vegetation they can produce. The clearwater streams are also a source of water. The less turbid rivers and sloughs served in facilitating travel in winter and summer.

Faunal Environment

Each ecosystem presented the human population with varying species of large and small game, fish, and birds as described above. Within each ecosystem some species were more important than others to the Salcha people. The prominence of each resource fluctuates during the natural year and similarly fluctuates in the subsistence cycle of the people. Those species which were most important in terms of food and raw materials are described below.

Caribou (Rangifer tarandus,/wudzex/). Caribou are migratory animals and migrate in herds. The Salcha people exploited the herd which is now called the Steese-Fortymile herd. At the turn of the twentieth century, this herd was also composed of the Delta herd, which is now thought to have branched off from the Steese-Fortymile group (Hemming 1971:46). The major area utilized by this herd in the 1950's is a 35,000 square mile area in east central Alaska and the west central Yukon with a carrying capacity computed to 70,000-90,000 caribou (Skoog 1956: x). Within this area, the upper and middle reaches of the Chena, Salcha, Charley, Goodpaster and Fortymile rivers are among those considered most important for utilization by the herd (Skoog 1956:7). Occupying areas close to timberline, the diet of the caribou varies somewhat with the season. The winter diet is comprised of lichens, sedges, grasses and dwarf birch while the spring diet also includes new shoots of willow

(Skoog 1956:xi). Caribou are subject to daily as well as seasonal movements. The seasonal movements or migrations were most important to the Indians. During the period from 1905 to 1935, the wintering range during the months from November to March were from the northern foothills of the Alaska Range east to the Fortymile district and in the White Mountains north of Fairbanks (Fig. 3). The summer range was occupied from about June through August and included the area through which the Chena, Salcha, Charley, Goodpaster and Fortymile rivers flow (Skoog 1956:36-37). Both the summer range and the more southerly range of this herd were in or near the Salcha subsistence area at the time of direct contact. The fall migration from late August to early October were most important and these routes (Fig. 3) coincided with the area used during this time during the annual cycle of the Salcha people. In spite of being migratory animals, caribou are also characterized by their unpredictability. One of the first people to systematically study this herd (in 1921) noted that "the principle feature of caribou migration appears to be its uncertainty" (Murie 1935:43). It is clear, then, that the group could not always bank on caribou crossing in the same area. Nonetheless, caribou were generally taken in the large "keyhole" type surrounds and fences described for other Athapaskan groups of the North (McKennan 1959:47). However, in years when the migration would shift, groups had to rely on cooperating with

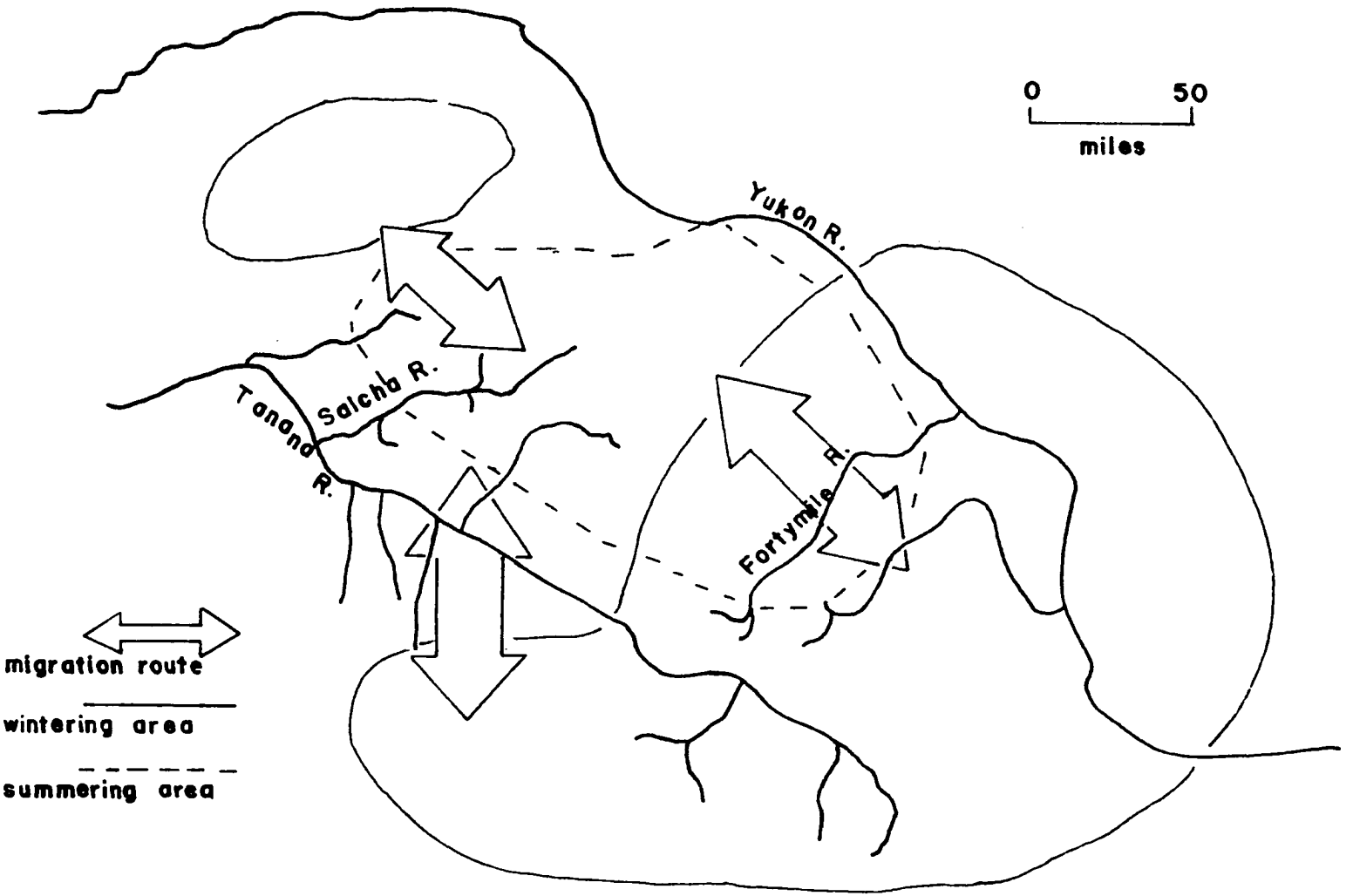


Fig. 3. Migration Routes, Summering and Wintering Areas of the Steese-Fortymile Caribou Herd (1905-1935) (after Skoog 1956).

other groups at other surrounds which were not in their usual subsistence area. Salcha people occasionally joined the Goodpaster or Healy Lake bands. Guedon also recorded such temporary multiband groupings for the Tetlin band when an important resource was lacking (Guedon 1971:78). No doubt "scouting reports" were imperative in the taking of caribou as they were in the acquisition of moose. Groups did not casually move from the fish camp to the surround waiting for the caribou but had to rely on the skill of some people who set out to determine caribou concentrations and the reports from individuals engaged in the pursuit of other game such as sheep as to the activities of caribou. Traditionally, snares and bows and arrows were used in killing the caribou in the surround. Virtually everyone, it is said, participated in those drives in which large numbers of caribou were taken:

> Some place is camp. Watch on side the hill. On side flat too. Pretty soon. Day and night watch too. Okay. Caribou is coming. Everybody get up. Two men chase...Sometime 1000...sometime 10 camp, 50 caribou...but two caribou just like nothing.

Shamans, too, were important in the acquisition of caribou:

> The first lead. They follow that one. Have one boss. One lead in the front. All medicine men say, "Don't kill the lead--he leads the rest." If they kill that one then they have to make sing [song]--"I making trail. Why is gun in my stomach?" Medicine man sleep and dream. "Go after and find that lead and bring." Then he [medicine man] gives caribou another lead. Gives that caribou which leads.

Skins were used for clothing, shelter such as tents, blankets and footgear. The meat was dried and taken back to camp. Sinew was used for lacing for snowshoes and sewing clothing and for snares; antler was used for various tools such as knife handles as well as clubs. The contents of the smaller stomach of the fall and winter caribou as well as that of the intestines were consumed.

In late August, the camps moved to Dry Creek for caribou, moose and sheep while others wnet up the Salcha River and Shaw Creek for moose and caribou. Much of the meat was dried and cached. In April, camps were established up the Salcha River for caribou and it was dried for the summer. Although caribou were most important during those times and in those general areas, they were taken at other times of the year when encountered or sought for fresh meat. This was true, for example, when people wintered at "Mutton Hill" which was also within the wintering range of the Steese-Fortymile herd at the turn of the century.

Moose (Alces alces gigas, /denaege/). Moose are considerably larger animals than caribou and vary from 800 to 1200 pounds for the female to 1000 to 1600 pounds for the male. Moose can adapt to many conditions and characteristically thrive on "transitional vegetation"--vegetation which comes in after fires, land clearing or glacial river break-up (Alaska's Wildlife and

Habitat 1973:13). Annual habitats are extremely broad and moose can be found concentrated from river bottoms to timberline. It is interesting to note that one informant described the Indian way of life as analogous to that of moose: "Moose travel like we do. Where they see good feed, they stay." Their usual concentration at timberline in late August through November (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973:12) would elicit their pursuit by natives. Such an area typified the caribou habitat as noted above and hence served a dual purpose as an area of acquisition of game for the Indians.

The winter period, however, is crucial to the survival of all moose as well as succeeding calves (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973:13). Wet crusted snow is their greatest hazard. Moose winter in two types of ranges--successional and climax. The successional wintering range produced after break-up providing willow on alluvial bars supports many wintering moose while the climax vegetation from 2500 to 4000 feet where a willow-dwarf birch ecotone occurs has been described as "the lifeblood of moose populations in these stable or slowly changing vegetation complexes" (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973:13). Moose concentration and distribution areas were clearly broad in the Salcha subsistence area at all times of the year (Fig. 4). The Salcha annual cycle cross cut the broad complexes to which moose are adapted and were utilized during varying times of the year.

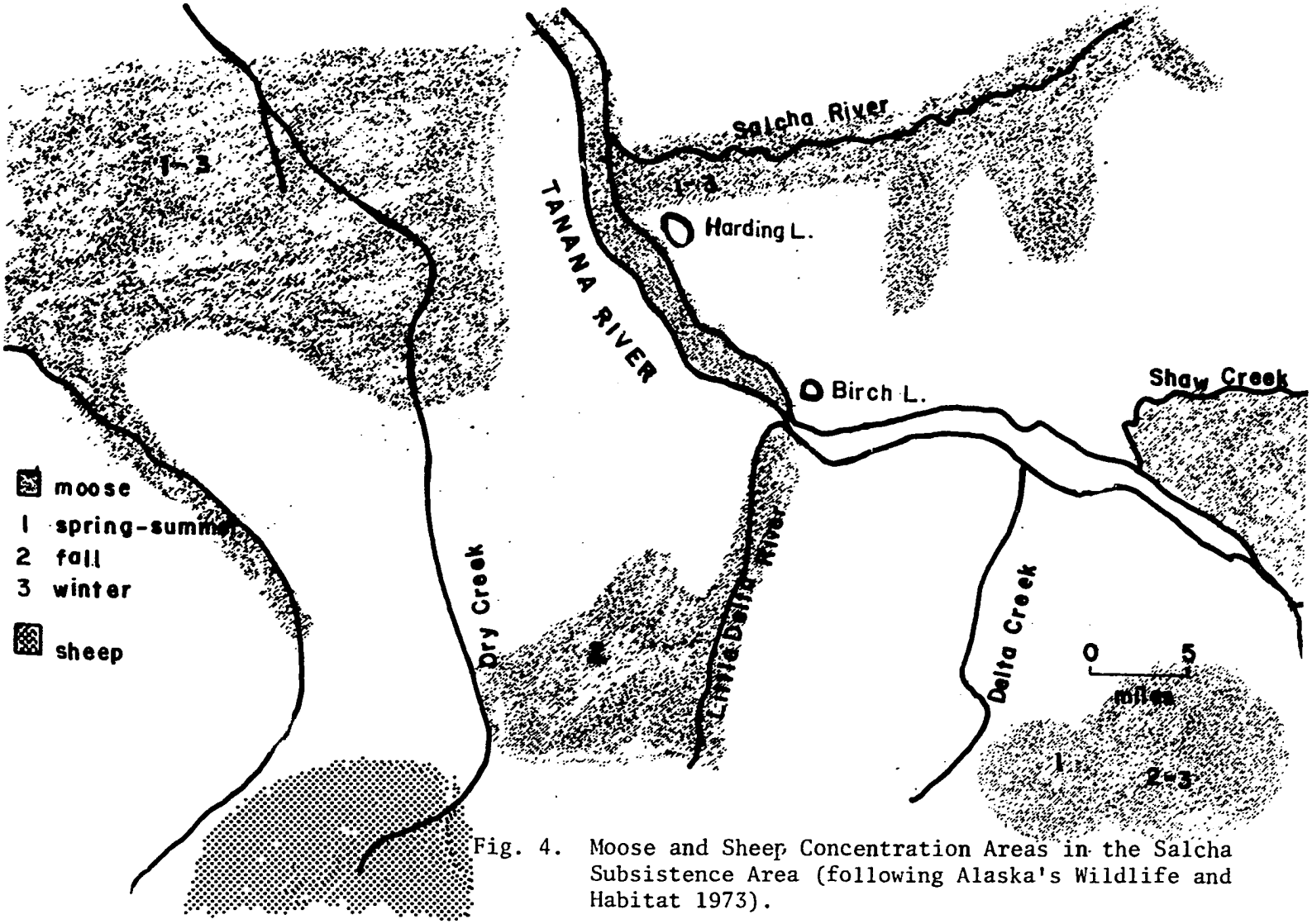


Fig. 4. Moose and Sheep Concentration Areas in the Salcha Subsistence Area (following Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973).

Rather than having to rely on somewhat unpredictable migrations of the caribou, natives could rely on knowledge of moose and moose concentration areas within the biome. Such knowledge took camps to areas such as Wood River, Dry Creek, and Little Delta for fresh meat in the winter and to the higher elevations in September and October where the meat was usually dried before being hauled back to camps near the mouth of the Salcha or at Little Delta. The Little Salcha area was cited as a popular place for some families where fresh moose meat was sought in March and April. People relied on the crusting of snow to aid in the take.

Children were designated as warm weather or cold weather babies at birth. At this time of year such children were used in a ritual to aid in making the weather warm during the days and cold at night so that the snow would crust and inhibit moose movement. For example, the process was described so that a warm weather person would burn some grass and scrapings from birch bark and then let the wind blow it away. Then the snow would melt. Then a cold weather person would do the same thing in order to make the snow hard. Hence, a crust would be formed on the snow making moose travel difficult by human travel would be facilitated.

The primary methods for stalking moose reveal native knowledge of moose behavior. One informant only occasionally accompanied her husband in the actual moose hunt but she was

well aware of the behavior of moose, even though she could only supercicially describe moose hunting techniques. However, her father's "brother's" son provides a good account of the methods which were also employed by Salcha people. He (Paul 1957:13-15) learned the technique from his father who was born near Big Delta:

> He know moose hear good and when wind make noise in tree and grass he can get closer to this moose. He knows it so he stay down-wind from this moose and he know that this moose cannot run fast in deep snow nor swim fast in water and, in winter, when this snow is deep and crusted and cuts his legs and belly this moose will hunt a place to live where snow is just little. This man knows that before he sleep he will turn back on trail little to one side so he smell those that follow before him...and they keep cutting this moose trail until they don't find his track--then they know he sleeps and they follow his back trail until they find him just sleeping...My great grandfather make little fence for moose between two hills and little creek run between these hills. This was just little fence maybe one mile long, not too strong, with snares every little way. Over this snare, men put just little willow. Moose push it with head to break it--just small willow maybe one quarter inch. When men and dogs chase this moose to fence, he get head in snare, can't get out.

Nelson (1973:104-105) also found a similar method still in use by Athapaskan hunters at Chalkyitsik in 1969-70. Other techniques employed in the acquisition of moose were the use of moose antlers or scapula brushed against trees to make the sound of moose going through trees. Another technique was to imitate the vocalization made by cow moose in early September when in estrus. The senior informant was so skilled in this latter technique that white hunters in the area had her accompany them to aid in their pursuit of moose. In addition, moose were snared (cf. McKennan 1959:48),

a technique which was more important prior to the introduction of the rifle. The use of moose, in addition to the consumption of the fresh and dried meat, was as extensive as that of the caribou. Moosehide, tanned and made into clothing by women, was primarily used for summer and indoor garments. It was also used to make menstrual hoods, tents, dog harnesses, shaman's flight blankets and sashes for carrying children. Sinew was used for snowshoe lacing and sewing, fish lines and bow strings, babiche for snares, bone and antler for tools such as skin scrapers, moose ribs for scraping birch trees in summer to extract juices, hoofs as sound makers to warn of the presence of women in menstrual seclusion. Mooseskins were also used in making boats. Informants stated a preference for moose meat, its quality being that it "fills you up" unlike sheep and caribou from which "you get hungry right away." The person who actually killed the moose was expected to make a "potlatch" or party with the ribs, brisket and head of the moose while the rest was divided up among the other hunters: "That man he got no meat. He make potlatch with it so he get nothing. Everybody expect that."

Dall Sheep (Ovis dalli, /debbe/). Sheep is the third part of the caribou, moose, sheep triad that made up the large game sought by the Salcha. This animal, however, was not as easily accessible. Nonetheless, sheep did occupy areas near caribou

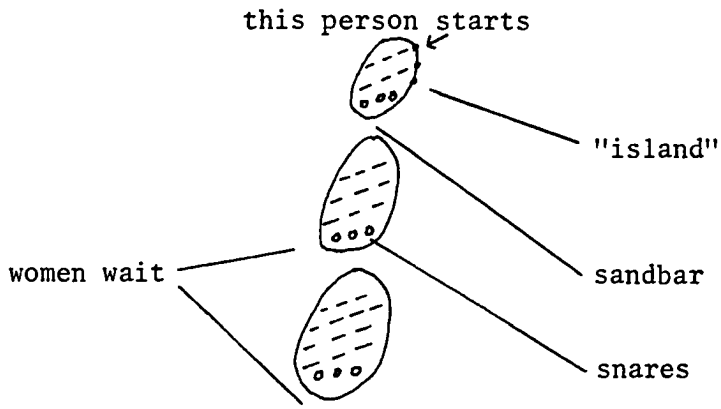
and moose range (Fig. 4). The Dall sheep habitat is in the alpine regions where they subsist on vegetation such as bunch grass, willow browse, dryas, and lichens (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973:11). Winter climate is the chief factor affecting their numbers (Olson n.d.). Deep and wind-crusted snows prevent them from obtaining their winter feed (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973:11). Sheep were sought by some of the Salcha and Goodpaster Indians at an area called "Mutton Hill" between the headwaters of Dry Creek and Little Delta River. They were pursued avidly during August and September, a time which would often coincide with the caribou migration of the herd in that area. Some families wintered at Mutton Hill from January to March taking sheep, moose and caribou whenever possible or subsisting on the caches of dried meat. Sheep meat was dried. Its skins were used for bedding and the horn for spoons. Sheep meat is considered most palatable in spite of its relative inability to fill one up like moose. Sheep are characterized by informants as "smart" and "can see good." One informant's father had purchased field glasses from the trader at Tanana which aided his hunting of sheep in the later part of the nineteenth century. Several methods of obtaining sheep were described. One method was for the adept hunter to carefully climb up the ridges and with the use of a pole push the sheep off the ridge. Another method employed dogs to chase the sheep so that they would fall down a natural ice

chute. After they fell, the hunter shot them. This place was called hoyaghek'ak'aet or "place where ice forms a chute." Sheep were also snared. It is possible that sheep were subject to some "overkill" by the Indians since it was believed that an entire group of sheep, even the smallest one had to be killed or it might go back and tell the other sheep. In a two week period in August or September, the senior informant noted that anywhere from 25 to 70 sheep could usually be taken. Sheep meat was dried and cached on the spot or taken to Little Delta and cached in ground caches.

Bear (black: Ursus americanus, /shos/; grizzly: Ursus arctos, /tsoni/). Bears seem to have occupied a larger place in the ideological system of the Salcha people at the turn of the century than in the economic system. For meat quality, black bear was preferred to the grizzly. Bears were usually hunted in fall time at Mutton Hill and up the Salcha River. Bear grease was mixed with "mossberries." Hides were stretched and dried and used as bedding. One story was recalled in which starving people resorted to cutting the bear hide into strips, burned it and then chewed it. My informants also remembered women who used the bear hide to make semi-waterproof footgear, although this was apparently was not a general practice. Bear bone, however, was renowned for its strength and desired for the manufacture of tools. As with any other fresh meat, the eating

of bear meat was forbidden to girls at the onset of menstruation and to menstruating women. No description of bear hunting could be obtained.

Small Game. The snowshoe hare (Lepus americanus, /ga/, "rabbit") was caught in caribou or moose sinew or babiche snares. They were described as being an animal which "everybody catch." These animals inbabit a mixed spruce forest, wooded swamps and brushy areas feeding on plant material and can be found in almost every ecosystem in the Salcha subsistence area. They reach a peak every 7 to 10 years during which they are said to number 600 per square mile (Ernest 1971). In a year during which the availability of large game was low, people subsisted primarily on hare which often kept a population from starvation. Women caught the bulk of hares either individually or in rabbit drives conducted with children and sometimes with men. Rabbit drives were often conducted on the "islands" down by the Salcha River. This was schematically depeicted by one informant in the following way:



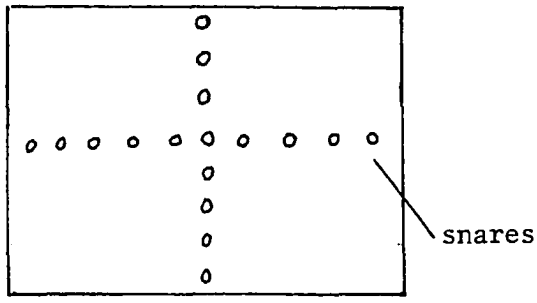
Individuals at the beginning started to chase the rabbits and made sounds of "woo-ooo, woo-oo, woo-ooo." After that person began running diagonally, the next person began the same pattern and so on. Rabbits which were not snared at the end of one "island" might proceed to the next. In addition to being taken through the use of snares, hares were traditionally taken with blunt arrows. Hares and other snared animals were especially important to older people not supported by others:

> My husband mother. Nobody take care. Never knew how to shoot big game. Just snare. That she knows how.

Hare was useful not only for the meat it provided but the furs were used for warmth. Skins were cut into strips, twisted and woven into blankets. Caps were also made from rabbit fur and fur was used as insulation in mittens and footgear. While hare is not always the most palatable food desired, its function as a food supplement and life-saver never goes unmentioned by the Indians.

Ptarmigan (Lagopus sp., /k'a tthebe/) also provided sustenance for the people and was taken in snares that were often intended for rabbits. Spruce grouse (Canachites canadensis, /dix/) and sharptail grouse (Pedioecetes phasianellus, /chaeltege/) were taken where encountered and likewise were an important addition to the diet when large game was unavailable. One method of obtaining the sharptail grouse or "pintail" was to place snares in a square area surrounded by trees, an area where these grouse

were known to gather. This was depicted by one informant in the following manner:



One grouse on one side would make a call while another on the opposite side responded with a different sound. In emerging, and attempting to cross to the other side the grouse would get caught in the snares. Other grouse would emerge and move about frantically getting snared as well. This was referred to as the "pintail dance" and many grouse were procured in that manner.

Ground squirrel (Spermophilus undulatus, /tthelix/) were common up on the hills but not in the lower areas around the Salcha locale. It was stated that when ground squirrels came down from the hill, it was bad luck because it meant that people were going to die. However, the senior informant noted the abundance of ground squirrels in the Mutton Hill area where they were snared and eaten in quantity.

Beaver (Castor canadensis, /tsa'/) were commonly eaten and often taken throughout the year (except in June) on the Salcha, Little Salcha and Little Delta rivers as well as near the lakes in the Big Delta area. In more recent times they were taken by

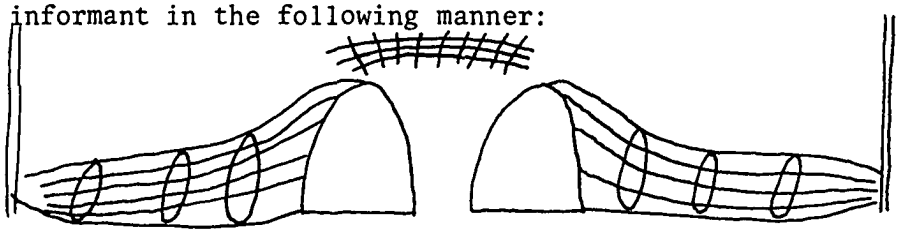
demolishing the beaver home:

> You put tent over. Put candle there. You tear up one house. Then they [beaver] go to another house. Indian waits at other house and shoots them as they go to other house. Tear up house where food is.

The broad floodplain of the Tanana River has been called one of "the most productive of all Alaska waterfowl habitats" (Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat 1973:29). Not only are the vegetative successions here important for moose but also for nesting waterfowl while the shallow ponds and lade edges of such lakes as Harding, Birch and Lost lakes in the Salcha area were important feeding areas. Waterfowl such as Canada goose (Branta canadensis, /haah/), brants (Branta bernicula, Branta nigricans), white-winged scoter (Melanitta deglandi, "black ducks") were popularly sought and procured in early May when camps were in this area preparing for the summer and fall fish runs.

Fish. The rivers and the Bottomland Spruce ecosystem were not only important in terms of vegetation for moose and waterfowl, small game and some fur-bearers, but also for the fish they contained. The most important fish for the Salcha people was the king salmon (Onchorynchus tschawytscha, /ługe/) whose run did not extend beyond the Goodpaster River. Other fish were important, too, such as dog salmon (Onchorynchus keta,/hiziługe/), silver salmon (Onchorynchus kisutch, /hiziługe/), whitefish (Coregonus sp., /tsabaay/), grayling (Thymallus arcitcus, /jutth daełaen/), lingcod (Lota lota leptura, /ts'an/), and pike (Esox lucius,

/oljadhe/). King salmon was described by one informant as "the really fish" and "that's the one! Somebody got not much, want to cry." The king salmon run began about the first week of July and usually continued strongly until the first of August. At present, a run of approximately 1200 salmon go about 80 miles up the Salcha with only about 200 running up the Goodpaster (S. Tack:personal communication). The Salcha River is an excellent king salmon spawning system on the Tanana (S. Tack:personal communication) and salmon runs were no doubt considerably larger up both rivers prior to the advent of commercial fisheries. If nothing else, it is the occurrence of salmon up the Salcha and Goodpaster rivers that sets off these groups of Tanana Indians from their Athapaskan neighbors more upriver, although, as noted later, they are essentially hunter-snarers. King salmon were caught in special traps which were set across the clearwater Salcha River about one-half mile up from its mouth at the junction of the Tanana Slough and the Salcha River. Informants noted that other groups along the Tanana with access to king salmon never used traps. The traps were usually set by family groups across the river with two traps per family set adjacent to each other depicted by one informant in the following manner:



The traps were about 8 feet long and 2 feet in diameter at the entrance narrowing at the opposite end. They were made from willows and bound with a type of "string" made by twisting willow bark. Women constructed nets which were placed in a semicircle over the entrance of the two traps so that the fish could not escape by jumping. Nets were also placed in back of the traps to direct the fish to the traps. Men constructed the fish traps. The fish were emptied into canoes by untying the narrow end of the trap from the pole and unloading the fish. Dog salmon were caught in the same type of trap but during the "fall fish" run of dog salmon and silver salmon they were caught in the Tanana River with dipnets made of willows and spruce roots. Both fish were very important and highly sought after in the Big Delta area which is an excellent spawning system for dog and silver salmon and they can be caught from late August to November (S. Tack:personal communication). This fall fishing was primarily a woman's activity while the men were out on the fall hunts. Few Salcah people ever adopted the use of the fish wheel and both informants commented that fish caught in those wheels did not taste as good because the fish were not killed as quickly as they were in the traps. Fish was dried on spruce or birch racks as it was though "bad luck" to use "cottonwood." The dried fish was traditionally placed in birch bark which was sewn together and cached underground. Fish eggs were cached in

king salmon skin. The skins from two king salmon were partially dried to insure that no worms remained. Then the two skins were sewn together with the scale side out leaving an opening through which the eggs were placed. With this opening sewn, hot ashes were then placed along all the seams in order to seal the container. It was then cached underground after slightly drying it once again. According to my data, platform caches were not used until the late 1880's. Dog and silver salmon were also caught and preserved. The acquisition of these fish and their preparation for caching for consumption by humans and dogs consumed most of the summer and early fall work hours from July to September.

Other fish were important in the fall and spring as well as the summer for immediate consumption only. They were "never put up" (stored for future use). These fish were whitefish, grayling, lingcod, and pike. Whitefish were also caught by means of a trap placed at the "mouth" of a lake. They were caught in the summer when the whitefish descend from the lakes and enter the streams. This trap was different from the salmon trap and contained a funnel-shaped "basket" within the outer trap to prevent the fish from escaping. Grayling were obtained with a hook and line and baited with either winter berries (described below) or fur from the veaver foot. These fish were important when taken in April as the ice began to break up. At that time, they were said to be especially easy to catch, since they were

close to the surface. Nonetheless, grayling were procured in the summer and fall as well. Pike and lingcod were also taken by hook and line.

Plant Environment

The plant environment of the Salcha people was important since, as noted above, large trees such as spruce and birch, as well as the numerous species of willow, not only provided a vegetation complex important to the fauna of the area but also provided raw materials for the manufacture of material items by the Indians. Other plants and their fruits were collected for consumption and some served medicinal purposes.

Spruce (Picea glauca, Picea mariana, /tsebe/). A spruce medicine (/daatsele/) was made by boiling pitch and bark together with water. This was said to be good for coughs. The top part could be scraped off from the boiled mixture and eaten and is said to "fill you up." However, it was noted by the senior informant that the old people did not know of this even when starving. It is possible that this was a contact phenomenon.

Birch (Betula papyrifera, /k'ix/). Like spruce, birch was important as a raw material. One birch fungus (Fomes igniarius, /ch'atnitthai/) traditionally very important to the Indians grows on the trunks of birch trees. This was gathered and dried and used with the fire drill to ignite a fire. Another

birch fungus* (Poria obliqua, /hɬsix/) referred to as Fomes pinicola by McKennan (1959:40) grows on birch trees and was collected and burned into ashes. According to both informants, the ashes were mixed with tobacco or mixed with some unidentified dried leaves and placed inside one's mouth. Prior to the tobacco/leaf mixture, the ashes by themselves were inserted into the nasal passages. The fungus thus used was said to have had altering effects on the user. It was also used as an insect reprellent as the smoke cleared an area of mosquitoes.

Cottonwood (Populus balsamifera, /dagheth/). This wood was not used for the manufacture of cultural devices although it was sometimes used as fuel. One informant said she preferred it to other wood because of the few crackling sounds produced when burning.

Willow (Salix sp.**, /k'i'/). Informants noted that one willow (Salix alaxensis) was used in fish trap construction and its bark used to make a type of "string." Another unidentified willow was also used in fish trap construction. The charcoal from burned red willow or alder (Salix arbusculoides or Alnus tenuifolia) was used for coloration in tatooing. The "rose" of the Bebb willow (Salix bebbiana) was collected for the sugar it contained in the sack within the "rose." One unidentified

*The two fungi were identified for me by O.K. Miller of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.
**The various willow species were identified by L. Viereck of Institute of Northern Forestry, Fairbanks.

willow (/ługe k'i'/) was never used in the manufacture of fish traps as it was said to be bad luck.

Blueberry (Vaccinium uliginosim and Vaccinium caespitosum, /jege/). These berries were common in the area and were gathered in the summer. Traditionally, these berries were not mixed with grease but eaten and not stored for later use.

Bunchberry (Cornus canadensis, /dahtsan jege/). Although I could not confirm the identity of this berry, Baggen (n.d.:5) reports that it is common in birch and spruce forests and was not eaten but served as a good eye medicine. The crushed berries were applied to eyelids when eyes were red and swollen.

Bog and Lowbush Cranberry (Oxycoccus microcarpus, Vaccinium vitis-idaea, /nketł/). Gathered in large quantities in August and stored in large birch bark containers for future consumption, this berry was avidly sought after. The non-fresh berries of spring were gathered during the thaw and were boiled in water and was a good internal medicine (Baggen n.d.:6). In contact times, this berry was often mixed with grease and eaten.

Highbush Cranberry (Viburnum edule, /nsaathał/). These berries were gathered and eaten but did not serve the place of prominence that the blueberry and other cranberries did. This berry was never stored for later use.

Fern (Geocaulon lividum, /dahtsa satthe/). This was a good medicine and was also used for food when there was a scarcity of

game. The roots were braided or twisted together and then boiled or roasted over a fire (Baggen n.d.:5). This was eaten in "springtime when hungry."

Horsetail (Equisetum silvaticum,/klox/). This grass was used in the preparation of a delivery bed for women during labor (Baggen n.d.:4).

Wild Iris (Iris setosa ssp. interior, /wuchistelsai/). The bulb of this plant which has a peppery taste was eaten fresh from the ground and is said to be "good for your heart" and good for shortness of breath. Results were reported to occur in 3 or 4 days to a week for the former ailment and to be immediate for the latter.

Labrador tea (Ledum palustre, /k'i' tladsai/). This plant had many uses. The dried leaves were boiled in water and made a good tea. The umbel-like flower clusters were also boiled and were good for colds. This plant was also burned and the smoke combatted mosquitoes.

Moss (Sphagnum sp., /glaadt/). This common ground cover was used for diapers and menstrual pads and "birth beds" as well as for chinking between logs of houses in later years.

Indian potato (Hedysarum alpinum*, /tsaath/). The root of

*This species was identified by D.F. Murray of the University of Alaska Museum Herbarium.

this plant was gathered at any time of the year except in the summer. It was especially good in May and was usually boiled before being eaten, although they were often eaten raw as well. They were also collected in the fall and buried "in the mud down by the river" surrounded by rose brush twigs to keep mice from raiding the cache. In November, the cache was removed and frozen. It was cooked with the juice from meat after the roots had been mashed.

Wild Rhubarb (Polygonum alaskanum, /guuth/). Rhubarb was collected and eaten boiled during the early summer.

Sage (Artemisia frigida*, /xunatsene/). This medicine was a cold preventative. The umbel-like flowers were dried and powdered and stirred into hot water to make a hot drink. It was also good in the treatment of influenza. It is said to have temporarily stopped tuberculosis. The leaves were also dried and pulverized and, according to Baggen (n.d.:5), the soft powder (like cotton) ~~was~~ applied to skin sores and was reported to have had great healing powers. This was collected in early May at a popular place called "Medicine Hill" located a few miles north of the old fish camp, now bordering the Richardson Highway.

Winter berry (Elaeagnus commutata, /dembąą/). These berries were made into "beads." They were also used on hooks

*The sage specimens were identified for me by D.F. Murray of the University of Alaska Museum Herbarium.

with beaver fur as bait for grayling. They are most commonly found on the sandbars near Big Delta. These are said to be good in early spring when they were boiled and mashed.

Other berries that were often eaten when encountered but not sought after in quantity were crowberry, raspberry, red currant and rose hips.

Annual Cycle

The Salcha year was divided roughly into twelve months during which subsistence activities took place. The activities varied according to natural fluctuations in other parts of the ecosystem. The twelve periods did not always constitute a full four week period, the duration depending on flucturation in the availability of any one resource or the time of freeze-up and break-up. The Salcha "month" at the turn of the century based on natural fluctuations in the environment usually corresponded to the months in the Western system. Their annual cycle of subsistence was carried out in an area of approximately 2400 square miles. This maximum area extends west to Wood River, north to Moose Creek, east to Porcupine Creek in the Yukon-Tanana Upland, southeast to the Shaw Creeks Flats and south to the Alaska Range. At times, however, areas beyond this were exploited with other bands. For example, the Salcha occasionally joined the Goodpaster band in fall hunts in that area, or the Healy Lake band at a fall caribou surround, engaging in multiband

subsistence activities. The Salcha year began in September.

September (Ninchuundaghe, "Moose rutting time"). At the beginning of this period much fish had been put away for future consumption. King and dog salmon was dried while fall fishing was carried on, and the emphasis began to shift to large game hunting-snaring. At the beginning of this period women were still engaged to some extent in berry and root preparation. Game sought at this time were caribou, moose, and sheep, although some sheep hunting had already taken place in August. Under the chief's supervision, the summer fish camp group disbanded and groups were relocated. The band would split up, with some members going up the Salcha River, some to Delta Creek, and some joining members of the Goodpaster band for game acquisition in that area. The new and relocated camps would be more central to the hunting areas to be scouted and utilized. Women packed meat to camp, but those with child care responsibilities tended to remain in camp. Everyone assisted in the caribou drives. Butchered meat from the hunt was dried and brought back to camp and cached.

October (Unentasaexdaghe, "Slush ice moves downstream"). This period was a continuation of the previous one. Fishing constituted a minor portion of their activities. Caribou and moose procurement were still important during this time. Occasionally Salcha people joined families from other bands such

as Goodpaster or Healy Lake. Others went to the Mutton Hill area and exploited that area for the caribou and moose. Women and children assisted in driving caribou into the surround where snares were set. Upon the return to the band camp on the Salcha River, winter gear was made--snowshoes, sleds, toboggans, clothing.

November (Unentatetetaege, "Ice freezes solid"). This period was also marked by band dispersal. Members of the community split up to go hunting for fresh meat. Some went as far as Wood River, others to Little Delta and still others to the Little Salcha. The band camp was deserted while the dispersed subgroups were usually comprised of anywhere from two to six families.

December (Saatsedl, "Little moon," "Short days"). Hunting activities continued before everyone ventured "back home" to the band camp on the Salcha River. Mid-winter festivities were prepared for--feasting, dancing, game playing. Feasting was communal and corresponds to what is now referred to as a "grub potlatch" (cf. Guedon 1971:319). Dances and songs centered on such themes as happiness or the antics of animals. One game, the stick-hook game, in which members of the community could ask for virtually anything from others using the appropriate gestures was popular during this time (cf. Guedon 1971:321). The festivities usually lasted two weeks. Not all band members joined the larger group at this time and others participated with other bands.

Following this community activity the band again dispersed to traditional areas to spend most of the winter. Families went to Wood River, Dry Creek, and Mutton Hill.

January (Unensaanochtaedlerox, "Little longer days"*). This was generally a period of extreme cold. Subsistence was provided for by cached dry meat and fish, fresh caribou, moose or sheep if obtainable, and snared ptarmigan and rabbit.

February (Jiyandza, "Eagle moon"). At this time some families from the Goodpaster band joined those of the Salcha at Mutton Hill, and subsistence activities were like those of the previous month.

March (Jitthadza, "Hawk moon" or Unenwhunitasaghe "Snow is soft"**). From the end of the last period and throughout this one, starvation was not uncommon. The group at Mutton Hill split up into smaller units to find game, perhaps as other families elsewhere did. In one instance recalled by the informants, people resorted to eating bearskin strips and babiche which prompted a move to a lake on Dry Creek. There they ice fished, an activity which apparently was not part of their traditional ways, and they survived. Scrapings from spruce bark and roots (Hedysarum alpinum) eased the crisis of starvation. The latter part of

*There was much difficulty by both informants in determining the name for this month. Too, they found difficulty in eliciting the name from their Indian friends. While the term cited here is not the common term, the informants provided it as a compromise.
**The latter term was added by the junior informant at a later time.

this period often yielded good moose hunting since dogs which were used in tracking and bringing moose to bay only during this period could move easily on the crusted snow surface while moose broke through with each step.

April (Hłudza, "Crust on snow," "Ice melts then freezes"). Occasionally, some Goodpaster people joined Salcha people on the Salcha River where they would catch grayling and lingcod. Around the Little Salcha, rabbits were taken until the females began to bear their young. Also, ptarmigan and spruce hen were sought. In addition, some travel was made up the Salcha for caribou, which were dried for later use in the summer. Clothing was made and repaired and birch bark was collected for canoe construction, containers and dog packs.

May (Unench'it'ąą hahutesai, "Leaves just begin to come out"). At this time women began to look for willow with which to make the fish traps, although men did the actual fish trap construction. The band camp was beginning to be reestablished in anticipation of the summer fish camp activities.

June (Unenstegaay, "When animals have young," Ch'it'ąą dza, "Leaves are out"). Final fishing preparations were made and waterfowl were procured.

July (Ługe dza, "Moon of the king salmon"). Still near the mouth of the Salcha, this was a period of intense fishing and fish storage. Traps had to be constantly checked so the weight

of caught fish would not carry the traps away. Fish were cut and dried. Blueberries were avidly sought after.

August (Ch'it'aa tsik dza, "Leaves turn yellow"). This was a continuation of the fishing and berry gathering with some sheep hunting by the men. There is an overlap in activities here since July fishing extended well into August and moose and sheep hunting extended into September.

The Salcha annual cycle clearly reveals the utilization, at least in part, of all six of the ecosystems outlined earlier for this area. However, the prominent utilization of only two of the resources mentioned by informants, specifically moose and king salmon, appear in the terminology used to designate the months. A comprehensive comparison of ecosystems within which other groups along the Tanana, such as Minto, Wood River/Nenana, Mansfield, Tetlin, as well as bands included in McKennan's (1959) Upper Tanana interacted during the yearly cycle would certainly reveal some subtle and not so subtle similarities and differences of these generally similar Northern Athapaskans. A detailed comparison is not presented here but the general aspects of annual cycles for various groups upriver from the Salcha people will be presented below for comparative purposes.

Comparison of Annual Cycles

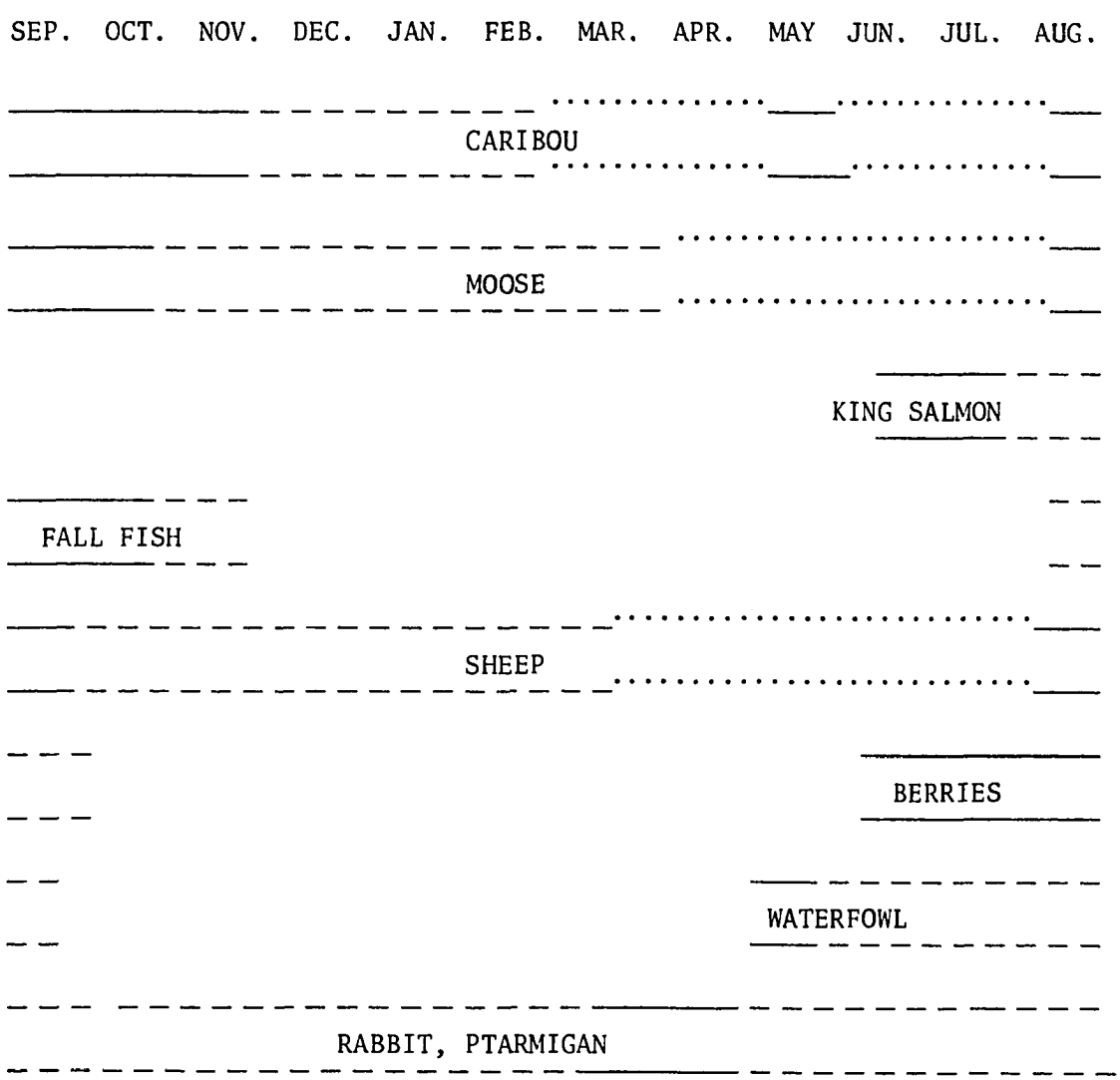
Salcha: A Summary. The Salcha annual cycle (Table 4) usually included the acquisition of caribou, moose, sheep, king

dog and silver salmon, some waterfowl and small game. The acquisition of salmon, by the nature of those runs was confined to July, August, and September. Caribou could be taken by intercepting migrations up the Salcha River and up Shaw Creek. Moose, as noted, have a broader habitat than caribou but do not migrate in herds. They were, however, concentrated at various times along the Salcha, Little Delta and Wood rivers and the Dry, Shaw and Delta creeks. Both the acquisition of caribou and moose required some movement from the fish camp locale and caches at the mouth of the Salcha but did not require the additional travel required to obtain sheep at the headwaters of Dry Creek and Little Delta River. Only the senior informant's family (her mother, father, father's brother, mother's brother, siblings and her husband) joined some Goodpaster families at Mutton Hill and maintained an additional semi-permanent camp at the mouth of the Little Delta River. This suggests that perhaps sheep were not part of the meat triad for other families of the Salcha band. However, sheep could be obtained at the headwaters of the Salcha. It is difficult to determine if any other Salcha people regularly exploited this resource since my data show that the informants did not travel much beyond Caribou Creek on the Salcha and referred to the area near the headwaters as land of the Eagle people. The absence of reference to sheep in the annual cycle terminology, even though one informant's family spent much time in the Mutton

Hill area may reflect its relative unimportance to the larger group--the Salcha band. The absence of caribou, too, in the annual cycle terminology may indicate a preference for moose--"it fills you up." In addition, the greater amount of meat and skins moose provide compared to caribou, as well as the greater skill required in hunting moose may be additional reasons for the occurrence of moose rather than caribou in the annual cycle terminology.

Mansfield/Ketchumstuk: A Summary. The Mansfield group as well exploited caribou, moose and sheep. However, king and dog and silver salmon were absent in this area. Whitefish going in and out of Lake Mansfield were taken and dried. Mansfield is in close proximity to the abundant caribou in the hills and they could be procured at any time of year, while small game was similarly always available (Guedon 1971:75). Sheep were taken to the south in the Mentasta Mountains. In Guedon's (1971:78) diagrammatic depiction of the Mansfield annual cycle, the emphasis is clearly on caribou and moose with marked procurement of sheep during later summer and early fall. Small game were important except in the summer months when waterfowl and whitefish predominated. Nearby, at Ketchumstuk, the situation was much the same except for the emphasis. Caribou, moose and small game were important year-round, while sheep were relatively unimportant at any

Table 4. Salcha Annual Cycle (following Guedon's [1971:67] format)



time (Guedon 1971:79). Waterfowl and whitefish were taken in smaller amounts than at Mansfield. The more marked emphasis on caribou, moose, and sheep year-round of Mansfield and Ketchumstuk is lacking with the Salcha annual cycle, although acquisition of fish, waterfowl and small game is much the same.

Upper Tanana: A Summary. Guedon's (1971:67) chart of the basic annual cycle, based on McKennan's (1959:32-37,46-50) data reveals a slightly different pattern. Caribou, moose, and sheep are emphasized during specific seasons: caribou in the fall and spring, moose in the winter, summer and early fall, and sheep in the late summer and early fall. Waterfowl and whitefish were much less important than at Mansfield. Tetlin, Last Tetlin and Nabesna (Guedon 1971:69,72,74) show a very similar pattern with regard to large game. However, whitefish and waterfowl play a more significant although temporary role than the more upriver bands of the Upper Tanana. The relative unimportance of fish among groups such as the Scottie Creek, Nabesna-Chisana groups as recorded by McKennan (1959) has no parallel with the Salcha group. However, the seasonal emphasis on large game, fish, waterfowl, and small game is much the same between the Salcha band and the Tetlin, Last Tetlin, and Nabesna bands.

Discussion. The following discussion examines the position of fish and game in the Salcha culture as well as some mechanisms employed in extending the limits of their available resources. The comparative data reveiwed for the above groups provides a

broader perspective in which to view the importance of certain aspects of subsistence activity throughout the year and how it is possible to override the limits of a roughly defined territory in order to subsist.

The Salcha annual cycle is most like that of Tetlin, Last Tetlin and Nabesna as recorded by Guedon (1971). Since the Salcha and Goodpaster peoples both had access to king, dog and silver salmon, the importance of whitefish as shown for other groups was substituted for by salmon. Although it also seems reasonable that salmon played an even greater role for the Salcha than whitefish did for groups further upriver, the annual cycle still remained very much the same.

The role that any one resource played during the annual cycle was subject to change from year to year and season to season depending on changes in the natural environment. From informants' statements, it is difficult to quantify the contribution of any one resource. Nonetheless, some generalizations can be made on the basis of the annual cycle, terminology and access to resources. McKennan (1959:35) maintained for the Upper Tanana that fish played a decidedly secondary role to game in their diet and that the lack of any reference to fish in their calendar "reflects the essentially hunting nature of the Upper Tanana culture" (McKennan 1959:112). At Tetlin, fish became more prominent as a subsistence activity (Guedon 1971:69). This is

not to deny, however, that the Tetlin culture also had an "essentially hunting nature." At Last Tetlin, too, Guedon (1971:70) noted less mobility than other groups further upriver which McKennan observed:

> ...so the immediately available resources include all game except mountain sheep. The village is so conveniently situated that there is no need for the people to move.

Mansfield was similarly located in terms of resources. However, even though the Mansfield culture exhibited a more year-round rather than seasonal emphasis on game as shown at Tetlin and Last Tetlin, Guedon (1971:78) still notes "the temporary importance of the fish runs." The Salcha people, with the exception of access to sheep, also enjoyed a strategic location such as that for the Mansfield and Last Tetlin bands. An early missionary to the area even remarked on this fact: "That's the sort of country Salchaket is--just a little spot surrounded on all sides by everything" (Betticher 1910:34).

I am not proposing here that fish in the Salcha culture occupied a role analogous to that of game. What is important, however, is to remember how advantageous a central location at the mouth of the Salcha was. This river, as well as the Goodpaster River, were the only clearwater rivers flowing into the Tanana from the north in which salmon ran in quantity. Instead of dipnetting for king salmon as the people on the lower Tanana

River did, these two groups employed a special kind of trap for the taking of salmon. This unique situation was clearly an advantage. And, as previously noted, this particular locale was advantageous in terms of both large and small game as well as waterfowl, with the only exception being the absence of sheep. The importance of this locale is also reflected in the name used in referring to themselves or their way of life--Saachaege--i.e., the mouth of the Salcha River, people at the mouth of the Salcha River, or culture of the people at the mouth of the Salcha. The annual cycle, then, as with groups further upriver, reflects the essentially hunting nature of the Salcha culture, yet the temporary salmon runs and the central location at the mouth of the clearwater river cannot be disregarded. Further investigation for the Salcha and other bands, of the diet when game was not available or was being pursued, could shed light on the relative importance of fish and small game from group to group.

It was made explicit on numerous occasions by both informants that certain areas were utilized by the Goodpaster people and certain areas by the Salcha people. I have no reason to believe that this is a postcontact phenomenon. Even with these bands, then, which spoke the same dialect and with whom social ties were strong, certain areas were maintained separately. While group boundaries limited the area of utilization for the band, they became flexible in times of need. Guedon (1971:78-79)

found that

> A band usually lived in its territory but was not bound to it. It seems that the location of the "boundaries" depended on agreements with surrounding bands, and were neither absolutely defined nor permanently fixed.

Occasionally, as noted, the Goodpaster band joined the Salcha at Saachaege to exploit the summer fish runs and the Salcha band then joined the Goodpaster in their area for the fall hunt: "Then we even." It was also stated that at times the Salcha joined the Healy Lake band "only for potlatch or we starving." Such reciprocity and temporary movements of a group during the scarcity of a resource was also noted by Guedon (1971:78) for the Upper Tanana. She perceptively added this was possible because of kin ties: "...people could move freely wherever they had kin relatives and this made possible a greater freedom of movement" (Guedon 1971:79). The ability to maintain this movement in an area in which natural resources are subject to seasonal as well as annual variation is clearly advantageous for the survival of the group. This ability for movement is coupled with the ability to learn the various microniches of animals as well as the local geography. As R.K. Nelson (1973:183-184) has succinctly stated for the Chalkyitsik Kutchin

> The key to successful exploitation of the subarctic forest is an intimate knowledge of local geography. Kutchin travelers must know the location of many trails and of portages between lakes or across river beds. They should also know every hill, ravine, creek, or meadow--in short, every detail of the local landscape. This kind of knowledge is essential for two reasons:

> First, to exploit his surrounding effectively a man must know the location of every favorable microhabitat of the plants or animals he seeks. Second, efficient travel depends on a knowledge of trails, portages, shortcuts, lakes, and rivers...No man in Chalkyitsik has a thorough knowledge of the entire area exploited by the aggregate village population.

A similar situation has been shown for the Salcha. For most of the year, the population was dispersed throughout the area, and it was shown how the senior informant's family tended to utilize the Little Delta and Mutton Hill areas while other members of the band utilized other areas. Acquiring knowledge of other areas within the band's subsistence area often required kin ties. After marriage, a man (adhering to a matrilocal residence rule) came to depend on his wife's brother, father or uncle to gain knowledge of another and new area. Still a "sib brother" or cousin of the man in still another area would facilitate the acquisition of knowledge of that locale should the need arise. Similarly, a woman would have to rely on kin ties for microhabitat knowledge for small game snaring in other areas than her own. Kin ties on an interband level not only facilitated temporary movement to join with another group, but kin ties also aided in learning the geography and microhabitats and trails in an alien locale. The social aspect of the culture then becomes as important as the technoeconomic aspect in subsistence and group survival. Nonetheless, it is clear that comparative data on annual cycles for more downriver bands such as the Wood River/

Nenana and Minto as well as for bands on the Yukon River would give us a better understanding and documentation ethnographically of the "cultural continuum" McKennan (1969) and Guedon (1971) and others find among the central Alaskan Athapaskans.

CHAPTER 4. SOCIAL CULTURE

Sibs and Moieties

The following is a presentation of the kin groups of the Salcha Indians. Although the following description of the Salcha sibs and moieties is rather straightforward, the structure is unclear. It is difficult to determine the effect of contact on the organization and structure of these kin groups, although further investigation might provide the structure at least for the early contact period.

The Salcha recognize at least six kin groups (sibs) of people. A discussion of these groupings with my informants was usually followed by a story involving Crow. The ending of this story is as follows:

> He's [Blackbird] on his own way. He comes to house. Nobody. Everything is cooked. Meat. Everything is cooked. Berries. Everything is cooked. But there is nobody. "What happened to everybody?" He looks around. Nothing. He goes his own way again. He hears another. Gee, big time. Potlatch is going on just like it. Big time. He opens the door. Nobody. Nothing. Everything's cooked there. Nothing. No people. "Where'd they all go? Where's everybody?" Nobody. He sits down. He thinks. He runs back to his grandpa [Crow].
>
> "Grandpa!"
>
> "What."
>
> "I'll pack you. Every house I go to--nobody. Nobody is there. Everything's cooked but lots of food but nobody."
>
> "Pick up all my feathers." He gives that boy job. He climbs up. He puts them back--all his feathers back.
>
> "One more is gone. One more is gone." Finally he got it all.

"Where?" There is marten, tsisyu, caribou, tekaan. All around the fire. He kicks them. They all come out. Kicks.

He just looks. "Which way did you do it?" he asks him.

"You're naltsin, you're tekaansai, you're tekaan, you're aɬsedenai, you're ch'aatsen, you're tsisyu. Your names are that way, " he tells them right there.

"I'm naltsin."

"You're naltsin. You're my side. This ch'aatsen, tsisyu, that way." Oh they eat big eat.

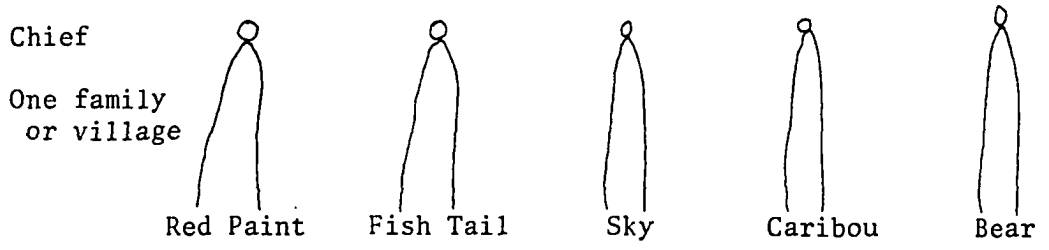
"Where's another one? You tell me." They go that way. Same way he did that. "How did you do that, Grandpa? That's the way you did it, some way, medicine, before I went. Is that like you?"

"No, no, no, no, no. I don't do that." Finally, then, from there he tells him, he says, "Grandpa, you've got to do it on your own way and I'm going to go my own way now. We're not going to be mad. We'll be friends and just split together. I'm going to be on my own."

"All right. We're going to do it now. Your own village now. I'm going to be another village, too."

So they just luck together right then. That's the end of it. That's all I know.

The story explains the origins of the groups. In addition, the groupings were explained to me in the following way: "You have German, French, Russian; we have caribou tail, fish tail, bear...." One informant's father's mother's father told her that a long time ago one "family" or "village" was "Red Paint" people (Tsisyu), one "Fish Tail" people (Ch'aatsen, Tchichelyu), one "People from the Sky" (Dayk'aakyu), one "Caribou Tail" people (Naltsin), one "Bear" people (Aɬsedenai). This was illustrated by the informant thus:



These families never married other families--"They visit together but no marry." The chiefs of these families all got together once and they talked all day. After sunset it was decided that the groups could marry each other--"That's why you got relation all over." The same informant used a different analogy when talking to another anthropologist, who interpreted it in the following way: "All the Indians talked like a big river. Then they separated in smaller groups like streams leading off from the river. Some of the streams are closer to one another than to others" (Baggen n.d.:5).

Origins for sibs other than those in the Crow story above could not be recalled with the exception of the Dayk'aakyu sib. Once when the Naltsin people were engaged in war, they called for help and some people (Dayk'aakyu) came down from the sky--"come from the stars"--on a spider web. The other sibs are characterized by general quality. The Naltsin are the Caribou Tail people and are good and peaceful people. The Ch'aatsen, or Fish Tail people, like Tchichelyu, are a "little bit mean and stingy." Alsedenai are mean and come from the bear: "If you're Alsedenai, you say 'My grandpa is bear.'" Women belonging to this sib are called

Tekaansai or wolf woman. Only men are categorically called Aɬsedenai. Tsisyu are people who come from red paint.

Analysis of data reveals matrilineal structure comparable to sibs (Murdock 1949:47). While the sib as a whole includes members of the same sib in bands other than the local band, Guedon (for the Upper Tanana) (1971:143) has termed each sib within any one local band as "the Localized Sib." She (Ibid.) also found that "the distribution of sibs in the bands [Upper Tanana] during the first part of the century shows that each settlement is and was characterized by the dominance of one or two sibs (or lineages)." As will be shown below, genealogies indicate the Salcha band contained the localized sibs Naltsin, Aɬsedenai, and Ch'aatsen.

Moiety affiliation was not always made explicit in our discussions of kinship but the idea that individuals belonged to "one side or the other" was expressed. The localized Naltsin and Aɬsedenai sibs belonged to one side (the Naltsin moiety). These people called themselves Naltsin or people whose "boss is Crow." Ch'aatsen was said to belong to the "other side" although it is unclear whether Ch'aatsen refers to the moiety or a sib in the opposite moiety, which may have been unnamed. Since the Dayk'aakyu helped the Naltsin they became members of the Naltsin moiety. The Naltsin sib is distinguished from the Naltsin moiety by referring to one's affiliation as being "really Naltsin" when referring to the sib affiliation--a feature which Heinrich (1957:12) noted in Tetlin. It was also unclear to which side the

non-local sib such as Tsisyu belonged and whether Tchichelyu was another sib belonging to the same moiety as Ch'aatsen or whether it was synonymous with the Ch'aatsen sib or moiety:

> "Tchichelyu is fish tail."
> "Fish tail is Tchichelyu?"
> "Yah. That is Ch'aatsen. That's the same."

The two "sides" or moieties are distinguished in terms of reciprocity. For example, in treating convulsions in a baby, a Naltsin would use the blood from a Ch'aatsen she dog's nose. For treating a Ch'aatsen baby, the blood of a Naltsin dog's nose would be used. An Aʌsedenai would use the blood of a Ch'aatsen dog (Baggen n.d.:60). If a Ch'aatsen person was sick, the dried placenta of a Naltsin person was used for treatment whereas an ailing Naltsin could be treated with either a Tchichelyu or Aʌsedenai placenta (Ibid.) Following the death of a Ch'aatsen person, the burial would be handled by Naltsin.

Marriage regulations and marriages that occurred shed some light on the operation of the sib and moiety system among the Salcha people. Marriages represented by individuals of the Salcha band around 1900 are presented in Figure 5 and Table 5. Marriages are predominantly sib exogamous. Moiety exogamy is required only for those of the unnamed moiety to which Ch'aatsen belongs. Those of the Crow (Naltsin) moiety can marry within that moiety or outside it. For example, a Crow person had the option of marrying either an Aʌsedenai person or a Ch'aatsen person. A similar situation was first observed among the Upper

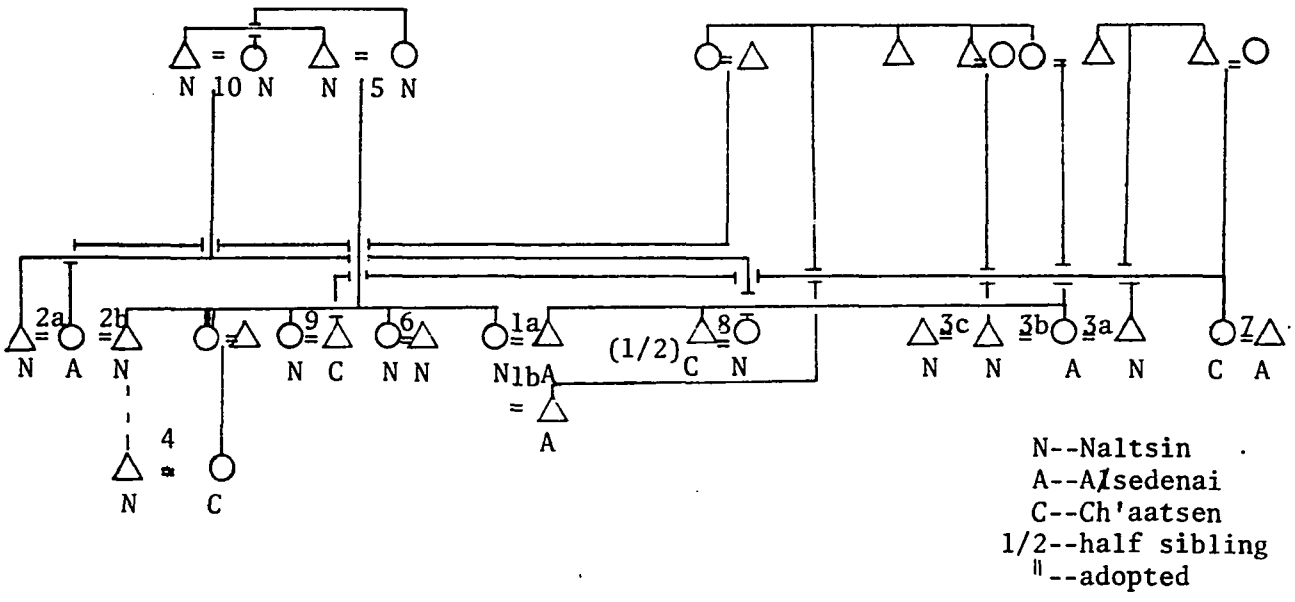
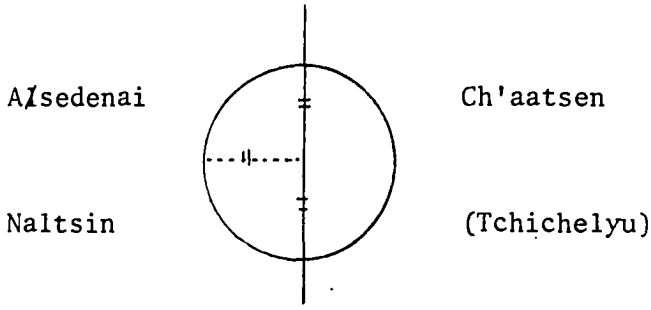


Fig. 5. Marriages Represented at Salcha Around 1900.

Table 5. Marriages Represented at Salcha Around 1900 (N=14)

					Total
Type 1	a.	Naltsin Woman	Alsedenai Man	2	
Naltsin Moiety Endogamous	b.	Alsedenai Woman	Naltsin Man	5	7
Type 2	a.	Naltsin Woman	Ch'aatsen Man	2	
Moiety Exogamous	b.	Naltsin Man	Ch'aatsen Woman	1	4
	c.	Alsedenai Man	Ch'aatsen Woman	1	
Type 3	a.	Naltsin Woman	Naltsin Man	3	
Sib Endogamous	b.	Alsedenai Woman	Alsedenai Man	0	3
Type 4		Ch'aatsen Woman	Ch'aatsen Man	0	0
Unnamed Moiety Endogamous					

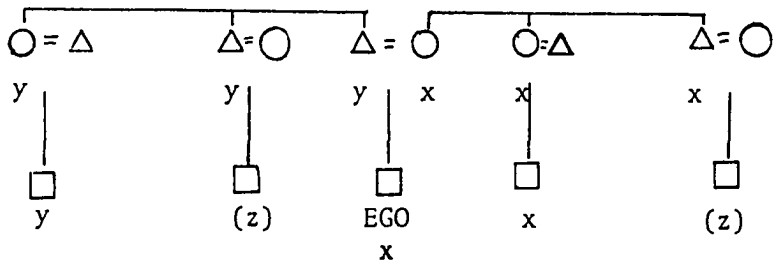
Tanana described by Guedon (1971:128). Diagrammatically, the situation as it appears for the Salcha people is presented below.



Individuals produced by a moiety endogamous marriage often called themselves tanadzeraysel meaning "half and half:"

> My mother is part Aɬsedeani and part Naltsin. Her parents are whole blood each of these. My mother is in the middle. We half and half but we all belong to Naltsin.

Guedon (1971:123) describes these as "middle people" referring "not necessarily to the situation of a sib, but, rather to the position of a person who has both cross-cousins and parallel cousins in the same moiety" (emphasis mine). However, there is an apparent discrepancy in her interpretation because while both parallel and cross-cousins may be in the same moiety, they may not necessarily be. Whether such cousins are in the same moiety as ego depends on whether ego's mother's brother and father's brother marry women in the sibs in their own moiety. For example, if sibs x and y belong to the same moiety, children of ego's father's brother and mother's brother could belong to sib z of the opposite moiety:



The senior Salcha informant can refer to herself as tanadzeraysel and genealogical data reveal that, with the exception of an adopted mother's sister, all her parallel and cross-cousins were in the same moiety as herself. If the criteria which allows one to call herself/himself tanadzeraysel or "half and half" or "in the middle" require all parallel and cross-cousins to be in the same moiety then Guedon's perspective gives us insight into unexplained findings by other anthropologists for groups in central Alaska. For example, Olson (1968:72) was told by indormants from Minto that there were three kin groups: caribou, fish tail, and middle while one person said that Naltsin was the same as caribou which was the same as middle which was the same as red paint. The fact that "fish tail" was not included lends credence to the notion that fish tail continues to belong to the "other side" along this part of the Tanana and that several groups comprise the Naltsin moiety. Similarly, Osgood (1971:40) was told by a Han informant that three clans were in two moieties, with Naltsin representing one of them. Additional genealogies for "half and half" individuals are needed to illuminate the structural

implications.

The Salcha matrilineally inherited dual division functioned following death and in some medicinal practices as mentioned above. Its importance in the potlatch is difficult to discern at this time. Although the notion of "hosts" and "guests" is presented verbally, exactly who comprised these groups is unclear. At a recent potlatch at Tanacross, at which one of the informants was potlatching, it was observed that many of the decisions regarding who would receive a gift were left up to another potlatcher (a member of the same sib and her second cousin's son) because "he make sure it go to 'right' person." Whether the "right" exchanges were a part of the Salcha potlatch system traditionally or during the first phase of contact is unknown, although I suspect they were. No information on the importance of sibs in warfare could be obtained although anthropologists for other areas along the Tanana have noted their importance in facial markings and in getting a war party together (Olson 1968:48; McKennan 1959:61). Nonetheless, the moiety system of the Salcha did regulate marriage and sibs allowed one to have "brothers" and "sisters" elsewhere.

Marriages among the Salcha people for this time period (1900) indicate a number of features. Preferred cross-cousin marriage was traditional but this practice was discouraged with the coming of the mission (1909). Such marriages would ideally insure that spouses would belong to another sib and possibly the opposite

moiety. There does not appear to be a tendency toward either matrilateral or patrilateral cross-cousin marriage for either sex. Several marriages are cross-generational. Secondary marriages for women, as shown in Figure 5, suggest that a form of levirate practice operated. All secondary marriages for those women (1b,2b,3b) are marriages to someone who is a sib "brother" of the first husband. In one case (1b), the second husband is the first husband's maternal uncle and in another (2b) his matrilateral parallel cousin (or "brother"). Although no instances in which the sororate was practiced were cited by the informants for the Salcha, one example was mentioned as occurring upriver at Healy Lake. It was noted that more generally, a "really good woman" might have two husbands simultaneously.

Local and band endogamy and exogamy appear to be almost equally prevalent while matrilocality (Tables 6 and 7) is marked. In-marrying individuals who were not Salcha, however, were not entirely alien to the group since they usually already had some kin ties there or were born there. Intermarriage for the Salcha tends to be upriver rather than downriver toward Chena, Nenana/ Wood River and Minto. The practice of matrilocality for marriages within and without the band would be advantageous since as McClellan (1964:9, and in Damas 1969:238) has noted "...the adult males would be familiar with two hunting territories."

Table 6. Band Affiliation of Adults Represented at Salcha Around 1900 (N=20)

Affiliation	Women	Men	Total
Salcha	9	5	14
Goodpaster		1	1
Goodpaster/Salcha	1		1
Copper River		1	1
Copper River/Salcha		1	1
Healy Lake		1	1
Tanana		1	1
Total	10	10	20

Table 7. Marriages and Band Affiliation (N=10)

Local Woman Local Man	4
Local Woman Non-local Man	5
Local Man Non-local Woman	1
Non-local Woman Non-local Man	0
Total	10

Kinship Terminology

Salcha kinship terminology was only obtained from the woman's point of view or woman speaking. This requires clarification since apparently some "woman speaking" terms are used only when reference is made through the same sex. If a woman is referring to a man's relative, for example, she might employ the terms the man would use in referring to those relatives (Krauss:personal communication). It has been shown for the Upper Tanana (Guedon 1971:152) and Minto (Olson 1968:75) that kin terms used by the two sexes vary somewhat although not in all cases. I could not determine whether this was also the case for the Salcha. Terms are not employed except in the possessive. They are presented here in the possessive first person singular. The Salcha terms given in Table 8 below are substituted in Table 9 by their corresponding capitalized letters.

Table 8. Salcha Kinship Terminology (female ego)

	My Relative	Individual(s) Referred To
A.	anaa'	mother, husband's mother
B.	sta'	father, husband's father
C.	sade	sister, mother's sister's daughter, father's brother's daughter (older)
D.	staedze	sister, mother's sister's daughter, father's brother's daughter (younger)

Table 8. Salcha Kinship Terminology (continued)

E.	sunaghe	brother, mother's sister's son, father's brother's son (older)
F.	shchile	brother, mother's sister's son, father's brother's son (younger)
G.	stlẽ	mother's brother's daughter, father's sister's daughter
H.	sye	mother's brother's son, father's sister's son
I.	shkẽ	husband
J.	sighe	husband's sister, husband's brother, sister's husband, brother's wife
K.	sdene'	daughter, son, daughter-in-law, son-in-law
L.	siye'e	brother's son
M.	stthe'e	brother's daughter
N.	siyaaz	sister's son
O.	shiyatse'e	sister's daughter
P.	stsaye	granddaughter, grandson
Q.	sak'iye	mother's sister, father's brother's wife
R.	sadh'e	mother's brother
S.	sbaets'e'	father's sister, mother's brother's wife
T.	staaye	father's brother, mother's sister's husband, father's sister's husband
U.	stsu	mother's mother, father's mother, mother's mother's sister, father's father's sister, mother's father's sister, father's mother's sister

Table 8. Salcha Kinship Terminology (continued)

V.	stsiye	father's father, mother's father father's father's brother, mother's mother's brother, father's mother's brother, mother's father's brother

Salcha kinship is clearly characterized by Iroquois cousin terminology (Murdock 1949:223) and bifurcate collateral terminology in the first ascending generation.

Ego's Generational Level. In ego's generation level, one's siblings and parallel cousins are called by the same term with reference to sex and ralative age. It was observed that a woman also used this same term for the daughter of her own mother's "sister" or parallel cousin. One's spouse, ideally, should not be in the sibling category. This category probably also includes other members of the same sib. One informant, who was raised after the mission at Salcha was established (1909), referred to her father's sister's daughter as staedze or "sister," extending the sister term to all female first cousins, cross- and parallel. The inclusion of these individuals in the sibling category would mean that cross-cousins could no longer be married to each other--the preferential type of marriage in earlier times-- and probably reflects missionary influence.

A woman called her male cross-cousin sye. If, however, the question is posed, "Who is nye?" the response is "My mother's brother's son." Emphasis is matrilateral for the woman although

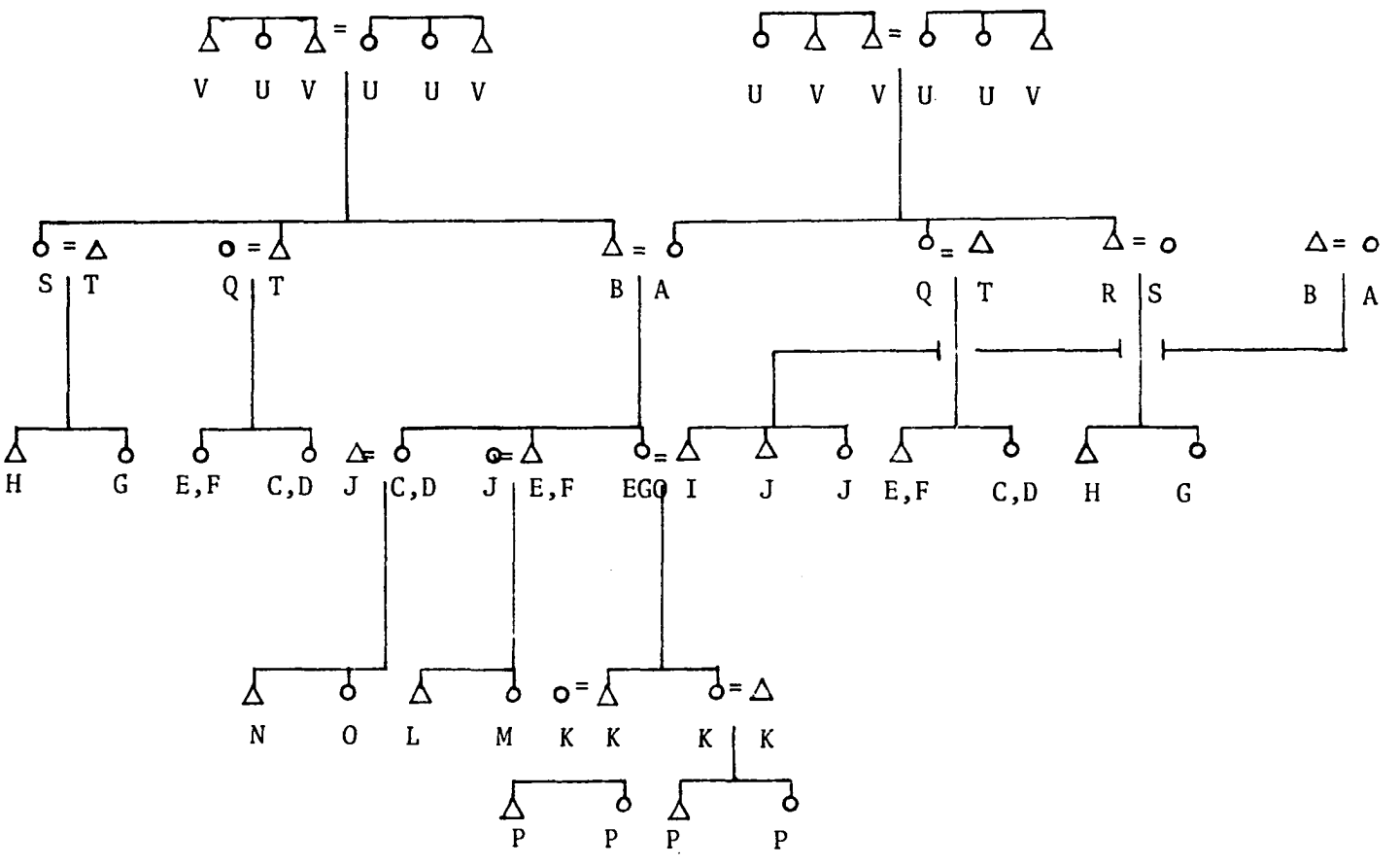


Table 9. Salcha Kinship Terminology

questioning revealed that the patrilateral cousin was called by the same term. Similarly, a woman called her mother's brother's daughter and father's sister's daughter stlẽ or partner. While this category, just as the category of sye, includes relatives from both sides, informants again emphasized the matrilateral relative. If a woman marries her matrilateral cross-cousin, the woman she would call sighe (sister-in-law) is the person she already calls stlẽ. The terms used in that instance, and anywhere else where there was a choice, depended on the relationship the individual wished to emphasize. In choosing the stlẽ term, emphasis is on the sibling relationship of parents and the partner relationship--both consanguineal relationships. To use sighe, however, emphasizes the affinal tie as well as the cross-sib relationship. Partnerships between women were valued relationships. One informant's partner was in fact her mother's brother's daughter. They "worked together all the time" and "stay with each other when husband gone." This partnership was established independently of either woman's husband's partners, a feature which Guedon (1971:197) also noted among the Upper Tanana Indians. The stlẽ term, as the Salcha women noted, was not limited to kin. Any woman with whom another woman maintained a close friendship or engaged in cooperative activity over a period of time might be called a partner. Similarly, not every person who is called stlẽ will necessarily be in a partner-type relationship, nor can every sister-in-law likewise

be called stlẽ. When one informant was asked who her mother's partner was the response was, "No partner, but ____ is her partner." Thus, the informant was indicating that her mother did not maintain a cooperative working relationship with another woman, yet her mother did have cross-cousins or partners. Hence, it is possible that the person called stlẽ may have either a biological or conjugal link with ego, both of these or neither of these.

First Descending Generation. Sons and daughers as well as daughters- and sons-in-law are referred to by the same terms--sdene'. One's siblings children, however, were distinguished from one's own children and from each other: shiyatse'e (sister's daughter), stthe'e (brother's daughter), siyaaz (sister's son), siye'e (brother's son). At Minto, Krauss has found the use of similar terminology (Olson 1968:79). For the Upper Tanana, Guedon (1971:152) recorded similar terms used in referring to one's own daughters and sons depending on whether the speaker was a man or a woman, while all nephews, nieces and grandchildren were lumped into one term ctcai. On the other hand, according to Heinrich (1957:17) son and daughter terms at Tetlin extended to children of a sibling of the same sex and only the women speakers lumped cross-sex siblings' children with grandchildren. Krauss (personal communication) disagrees with Guedon's findings that all nephews, nieces and grandchildren are lumped into one term by both sexes speaking. I might add that

Guedon's record may indicate a recent trend toward such lumping. Krauss (personal communication) maintains that the possessive form of the term sdene' "person" for son and daughter replaces the proto-Athapaskan terms for son and daughter. The proto-Athapaskan terms for son and daughter survive only in the extended meanings referring to a child of a sibling of the same sex (cf. also Hoijer 1956). This situation occurs both at Minto and Salcha--but not with the Upper Tanana. It also occurs with the Koyukon (Krauss:personal communication). The Upper Tanana terms clearly reveal the continuance of the proto-Athapaskan terms. These data are summarized in Table 10.

First Ascending Generation. In the first ascending generation mother and mother-in-law are called by the same term anaa' and father and father-in-law are called sta'. The biological and conjugal are linked in one term. Since Salcha parallel and cross-cousins are distinguished, it would seem that with cross-cousin marriage one's mother-in-law and father-in-law would be the person you already call father's sister, mother's brother's wife or mother's brother or father's sister's husband. This actually occurs with the Upper Tanana where mother's brother can be called ctsei or father-in-law, but not all men a woman calls ctsei can be called ce'e or mother's brother (Guedon 1971:170-171). Similarly, with the Upper Tanana, the mother-in-law term stsǫ is shared by ego's father's sister and mother's brother continues to be called ce'e rather than ctsei or father-in-law, the latter of which also

Table 10. Survival and Replacement of Proto-Athapaskan Terms for Son and Daughter

English Translation	Salcha	Minto (Olson)	Tetlin (Guedon)	Tetlin (Heinrich)
daughter (w.s.)	sdene'	sdɵna'	ciatse	uyaa?tsei
daughter (m.s.)			cte'e	utse
son (w.s.)	sdene'	sdɵna'	ciU,ciaz	ushe
son (m.s.)			cie	ushe?e
sister's daughter (w.s.)	shiyats'e	syots'a'a	ctcai	uyaa?tsei
sister's daughter (m.s.)				uxe
brother's daughter (w.s.)	stthe'e	stɵa'a	ctcai	utsui
brother's daughter (m.s.)				utse
sister's son (w.s.)	siyaaz	syozra	ctcai	ushe
sister's son (m.s.)				uxe
brother's son (w.s.)	siye'e	sy'a	ctcai	utsui
brother's son (m.s.)				ushe?e
grandchild	stsaye	stsoya	ctcai	utsui

connotes familiarity.

For the Salcha, the behavior mother's brother exhibited toward his sister's children could warrant the extension of the term sta' to this man: "Mother's brother treats like just about own kids. Father's brother too sometimes. Mother's brother treats boy like own family--just like one family." With preference for cross-cousin marriage and matrilateral cross-cousin marriage for the man in question, marriage to mother's brother's daughter creates a situation in which mother's brother becomes father-in-law. Combining such a marriage practice with the tendency toward matrilocality, a boy's father-in-law was very important to him economically. It was from this man that the son-in-law was likely to learn a new area of exploitation just as the man's sons had or would. Cooperative hunting would also take place with this man. Although it has been recorded that brothers-in-law are often partners for economic reasons among the Alaskan Athapaskans (McKennan 1959:50; Loyens 1966:69; Olson 1968:76), it cannot be assumed that a man's brother-in-law would remain unmarried and live in the same locale. It then seems logical that a father-son type relationship would be established between father-in-law and son-in-law and warrant the use of the terms sta' and sdene' respectively. That these two men are consanguineally related as well as being sib "brothers" potentially allows for cementing the relationship even further, or, viewing it from another perspective, as a point of departure for the additional conjugal

and economic relationship. Furthermore, in the Salcha terminology, sadh'e is reserved only for mother's brother and possibly implies the authority of the maternal uncle or a special relationship that existed there. This term, like the terms for husband and sibling's children and own children is reserved for one relationship only. Mother's brother also belongs to the same sib as ego. A woman's children then belong to the same sib as mother's brother. Mother's sister and father's brother's wife are called sak'iye and belong to ego's sib also (ideally). Father's sister and mother's brother's wife share the term sbaets'e' and ideally belong to the "opposite" sib of ego. Similarly, father's brother and mother's sister's husband share the terms staaye and also belong to the "opposite" sib. It is noted, however, that father's sister's husband is also called staaye although this man is not necessarily a member of the opposite sib as ego, but could be of the same sib! I cannot explain this apparent discrepancy at this time.

Second and Third Ascending Generations. As with the Upper Tanana Indians, any man or woman in the second or third ascending generation, whether consanguineally or affinally related, is called grandfather (stsiye) or grandmother (stsu). For the Upper Tanana, Guedon (1971:169) noted that stsǫ was also extended to father's sister and to mother's brother's wife. Among the Salcha and at Minto these women are distinguished from grandmother. Unlike the Upper Tanana, "auntie" is not always

translated to mother's sister but also includes father's sister, although emphasis is matrilateral. A person in the second or third ascending generation was not always called "grandma" or "grandpa" but "auntie" or "uncle" depending on the relationship of the individual to one's parent. The person in the second or third ascending generation called "auntie" or "uncle" may in fact have been mother's or father's aunt or uncle. Also, the terms stsu and stsiye may be extended to any old woman or man as a term of respect.

Clearly, the application of kin terms in Salcha culture was not rigid. The use of any term depends on the relationship which the speaker wants to emphasize. These relationships include the consanguineal, affinal, cooperative and sib relationships as they directly pertain to the individuals in question, but also those relationships as they are emphasized by one's parents. In addition to this flexibility, the particular relationship emphasized by any two individuals in question might also shift from time to time with circumstances.

Leadership

The formal public role of chief (daiya: rich man; huyąą: rich woman) among the Salcha was occupied by a man whose position was either ascribed or achieved. In the first case, a man would have to continually validate his status as a chief by exhibiting the qualitites associated with chieftainship--wealth, generosity, wisdom, hunting prowess, for example. In the second case, wealth

wisdom and hunting prowess could result in a man becoming a daiya: "one talk smart talk, you chief." According to my data, chieftainship was inherited from father to son in many cases, although it could be inherited by a man's brother or "nephew." Some chiefs who inherited the position were regarded as "mean" (stingy) by the people and hence had little following or "people don't listen to him." Nonetheless he was still referred to as a chief although a "mean" one. This probably means that although the man contined to possess the wealth of a daiya, he no longer exhibited the accompanying qualities of daiya. This occurred with the senior Salcha informant's father and other daiya in the Nenana region had the same reputation. The position was not limited to one man.

The duties of the chief were economic, social and political in nature. The daiya was expected to tell everyone "when to go hunting, when to go trapping and made everything peaceful." In the economic realm and most important to the subsistence cycle, the leader would decide when and where to move camp and where to hunt. His responsibility, then, was to initiate the hunting parties and determine from the scouting reports when and to where these moves and hunts were to occur. For example, one group went up the Salcha, one to Dry Creek and another to Big Delta: "If hunting, no luck, then they know where others are. Daiya watch everything." Since it was characteristic that the chief was the best hunter, it was his skill, luck, and knowledge that

allowed him to command respect and hence initiate the camp moves and consequently the hunts. To be a good hunter, however, he not only had to be acutely aware of the seasonal nature of several biones, but also aware of the annual fluctuations of each season in these areas and had to anticipate stress. In short, his role was crucial to the food quest. Ideally, it was his responsibility that the camp had food to eat and he was expected to feed anyone who came into his house:

> That's the way chief supposed to be. Looks at every house. If it looks like someone starving then chief goes to every house and collects a little grocery. He takes it to them.

Clearly, the chief was not concerned entirely with the collection of food resources but also its distribution. Although custom dictated the initial distribution, it was the chief who directed any further apportionment of food. A mean chief was described as one who starved his people (Baggen n.d.:25).

Socially and politically, the chief "made everything peaceful." Around the camp, this would include making sure that a child's curiosity did not go unwatched, nor that the dogs became a nuisance to the camp. At potlatches of any type, it was the duty of the chief to make sure that the atmosphere was not disrupted by any individual. This has been observed recently at potlatches where youngsters were reprimanded for ill behavior. In addition, it was characteristic that the chief made a speech at a potlatch and I have observed that the speech generally expresses a desire for unity among the people. Such unity was

important economically as well as socially. The Salcha chief in many instances served as a peace officer maintaining peace on an intraband level. At times this peacemaking role extended to the interband level, evidenced by the occasional meeting of chiefs to settle disputes. One instance recounted repeatedly by the senior informant was that there was a war all along the Tanana and the chiefs decided to meet together. The decision was that there would be no more wars between groups and there reportedly have not been any since (this event took place during the time of the informant's great grandfather, probably in the early 1800's). The Salcha chief's role in the earlier war parties was one of initiation of raids (Baggen n.d.:57) or recruiting men for the raid. In either case the chief was required to pay the recruited directly, or indirectly by paying the chief of the "village" who would help. With functions on the intra- and interband level it is easy to comprehend that the chief was somewhat of a central communications center. He was the receiver of messages (e.g. potlatch, war parties, disputes, scouting reports) and he sent them out. As a receiver and transmitter of messages, it was crucial that the chief had intimate knowledge of sib and moiety affiliation of all individuals in his band and those who had moved or married into other bands (cf. also Guedon 1971:234). This was especially important in times of potlatch and war parties since one's affiliations were

critical to the role any individual might play in either event. In the social and political realms, then, the chief's duties were primarily within the band but not limited to it and they extended beyond that level whenever and wherever interaction with other bands took place.

Among the Salcha the chief was very often also a shaman. This meant that the chief was also in touch with supernatural powers. Such contact, then, could have been used either positively, e.g. calling the game or influencing the abundance of anything in the biome, or negatively, as Baggen (n.d.:57) reports, by "killing individuals who didn't obey." Hence, the possession of supernatural powers was either an asset or hindrance for the chief in maintaining a following. Most Salcha chiefs in the two generations preceding the senior informant's were shamans and some used their powers positively while others used them negatively as well. The chief who is always referred to as the best chief had "no medicine" and never killed people. How supernatural power was used also shaped the attitudes that people within and outside the band had toward him. In any event, such power was a benefit in the food quest.

It was stated that chiefs often had more than one spouse. This was not only due to his economic prowess but in many cases was due to his supernatural contact as well. Either asset placed a person in the position to have multiple spouses. In addition, it was determined that the term "many wives" often

referred to the fact that the chiefs had spouses serially and not necessarily simultaneously or that he had one spouse but many "sweethearts." The advantage of multiple spouses in increasing alliances, ease in childrearing and the enculturation process and the division of women's economic tasks has been noted in anthropological literature (Harris 1971:277) and was probably advantageous economically, socially and politically for the Salcha chief and possibly for the spouses as well. As mentioned above, a "really good woman" could have two husbands.

The female counterpart of daiya was huyąą. Such a woman was also rich and could regulate activities in and out of camp. It could not be determined if such a status was inherited, but it seems to occur among certain members in one matrilineage (e.g., the senior informant, her mother, her mother's sister, her mother's mother) although it could have been achieved as well and was possibly a combination of both ascription and achievement like the male chief in some instances. Her responsibilities are not delineated as they were with the daiya although it is likely that her advice was sought in carrying out the group economic pursuits in and around camp. Her skillfulness as a snarer of small game and her industriousness in all she did gained her respect from other members of the camp. The huyąą was occasionally a shaman as well. As a final note, a huyąą was not the same as the spouse of a daiya although it was possible that they could be one and the same.

Comparative data. The position of the Salcha chief was not necessarily attained along rigid lines. The man who showed competence in leading the subsistence activities and revealed intelligence in thought as well as action could easily have occupied such a position. This was apparently true in other areas along the Tanana. Olson (1968:81) reports for Minto that this person must be pragmatically inclined and the people "would follow whoever's advice seemed most practical." Reporting further for the Upper Tanana, McKennan (1959:132) states that the ascribed status went to the brother or maternal nephew but "leadership in the end depends on individual ability and ambition and has little connection with clan or family...the best hunter or shrewdest trapper becomes the leader of the band." McKennan (1959:95) notes too that the chief's duties included making sure that murders and the abduction of women did not go unavenged--one purpose of the war parties. Again, the chief's role between bands was important.

Although there is no mention of huyąą in the literature, let alone her duties, the influence that women had in the affairs of the public has been recorded for Minto: "the women had an equal voice with the men in the community affairs and were not afraid to speak up" (Olson 1968:113). It is not unlikely then that a huyąą could have exercised considerable influence. In addition, such female influence, as Olson reported, has been observed recently among the Minto people (D. Slaby:personal

communication).

In summary, the daiya and huyąą had the ability and often the responsibility of regulating the economic, social and political activities of the group. In many instances, religious activities occurred within the camp and outside it as well as within and between bands. While the role of the huyąą was not as formalized as that of the daiya, the characteristics and qualities of the rich woman were very clear in the informants' minds.

Life Cycle

The highlights of an individual's life are often those biological changes that occur as one proceeds from birth to death. The cultural prescriptions which attend these natural changes reveal differences and similarities cross-culturally. These events have traditionally been termed "life crises" by anthropologists. Although each event may or may not be in fact a crisis for the individual, the improper handling of the event may have dire consequences for the community as well as the individual. It is within this context that such events as pregnancy, birth, childhood, puberty, marriage, old age and death are viewed.

Pregnancy and Birth. Certain prescriptions were placed on all pregnant women especially food taboos. Both Salcha informants were advised against the eating of animal heads, the consumption of which would cause the baby to cry profusely. The sex of the

child was predicted by the appearance of the woman's abdominal area--if flat, the child would be a girl; if "pointed" the child would be a boy. Guedon (1971:262) noted for the Upper Tanana that the husband had to observe certain taboos, too, such as the avoidance of killing certain fur-bearers. Further information is required to determine the larger implication of breaking the taboos. From a woman's viewpoint, pregnancy was not always a desired condition. This is evidenced by informants' stories of attempted miscarriages and ideas about a kind of nonordinary hysterectomy. One instance was recalled in which a woman set up a rope and ran from a distance directly into the rope in an attempt to miscarry. The fetus died, although the mother did too. Another incident was related in which a woman tried to miscarry by engaging in extrastrenuous activity. Thinking she had miscarried, she began to eat the usual foods only to find out later that she was still pregnant. It was stated that a woman could be kept from having children with the aid of a shaman. By some power the shaman could get inside the woman and "tie her up" so she wouldn't have any more babies. No medicines were known to prevent pregnancy. No positive or negative attitudes were expressed by informants in relating the above incidents. The attitude was simply one of matter-of-factness--activities that women attempted to avoid the additional children. These incidents usually related to women who had "too many kids." It was said, although in another context, that men and women without children would not have

anyone to take care of them when they got older--hence adoptions occurred not only by women who could not have children, but older people who had no one to take care of them. Often such children were orphans or part of a family which had too many children.

When a woman was about to give birth she went to a sort of spruce bough "tent" which had been constructed apart from the camp (Baggen n.d.:13). Here the parturient woman was attended by four or five other women. The woman kneeled over a shallow pit and sat on her calves, legs apart. As she held a rope which hung vertically from crossed poles, one woman sat in front to receive the baby. Another attendant was at the mother's back and she pressed her knees against the woman's lower back and pushed on the abdomen with her hands. It was considered good not to make any verbal indications of pain to show that you were a "tough woman." The navel cord of the newborn was cut four to six inches from the body. This was dried and bound in moosehide and kept by the mother. The placenta was also dried and bound in mooseskin and decorated with beads. The Salcha mother hung this on the baby's birch cradle-basket for good luck. In addition, the nasal septum and ear lobes were pierced so that the child would be rich (Baggen n.d.:13). The senior informant noted that the woman stayed in this tent for 10 days before returning to camp. Following the return she was not to sleep with her husband for 50 days and had to cook for herself and eat by herself.

Childhood. During adolescence, children began to take part in certain activities and learn by watching and listening to their elders and stories told by them. Most important, as one informant was told by her father, was to learn to take care of yourself (Baggen n.d.:13). This value of self-sufficiency seems to permeate many experiences recalled about adult life and old age. Specific behavior of parents towards children was unobtainable for the Salcha. Guedon (1971:275) noted for the Upper Tanana that after almost six months the father would appear as "indulgent and loving" while the mother became more of a disciplinarian. In addition, she (1971:276) added that differentiation of activity according to sex began early. It is likely that such features characterized Salcha childhood as well. A child learned certain techniques by watching. This fact was impressed upon me numerous times and one informant recalled in particular learning to tan mooseskins in just that manner even though she frequently asked questions. A child's interactions were not always with parents but extended to the entire community. As Guedon (1971:279) describes for the Upper Tanana:

> The children were bound neither to the children of their own age, nor to the persons of the same sex as themselves. Their social life included contacts with all the inhabitants of the settlement.

Childhood was not, however, filled with watching, learning from stories, play and other social interaction but was also filled with small tasks. Children were sent to fetch wood, haul water,

and in the summer they picked berries and watched fish traps. A girl's tasks also included taking care of younger children, cleaning and some sewing.

Girl's Puberty. It was at puberty that the most significant change occurred in a person's life and a time at which their relation to the entire community was made most evident. It is for this time both informants have vivid recollections of a change in their lives. For a woman, puberty is marked by the onset of menstruation or in native terminology "teniya:" "first come to woman." When asked what happens when a girl first comes to woman, the response was "everything bad luck." At the onset of menstruation both women recalled feeling very sleepy and tired. A teniya girl was expected to go way out in the woods and find a big spruce tree. It was important to find a good one to insure future wealth and finding such a tree was not always an easy task. The girl marked that tree. She could not "holler" but had to whistle or bang sticks together so that she might be found. After being found by her mother and mother's sister, one informant remarked "then everybody cry, cry, cry." Then a spruce bough "tent" was constructed. A fringed moosehide hood traditionally was placed on her head held down by sticks. In later times, a blanket pulled over head, roughly described as being like a dress pulled up from behind, secured with sticks replaced the earlier moosehide hood. Donning such a hood, the girl should not see the sun, moon, northern lights, stars,

fresh meat or fresh fish. That was bad luck and could cause her to become blind. The girl had to sit with legs outstretched:

> Everything's bad luck. That's what my mother used to tell me. You can't step over your food, you have to sit inside a tent house. You put your legs together and sit straight up [or] your family going to die.

The interstices of her fingers were bound with sinew and the girl had to sew with her fingers like that. She was to keep busy sewing and attending to herself ideally for 100 days. Each day she was to rub on her stomach and blow so that she would live to be old. Her teeth had to be rubbed with a hard stick every morning so that her teeth would not crack or go rotten. She had to drink through a bone straw made from a swan's wing on which long beads were tied. She was brought "lard" and dried meat and dried fish. Meat and fish had to be at least three days old and fresh berries could not be eaten. During this time, the girl counted the days on a sinew "string" and tied a knot and feather for each day. After 40 days the girl took a bath and threw that string in the fire. For the next 40 days another one was made which the girl kept in her sack of personal belongings for good luck. After 100 days the girl was supposed to return to her home for another 100 days. How strictly this was adhered to in the past could not be determined although the senior informant only stayed 50 days inside while the junior informant (during the early 1920's) only stayed outside 10 days and 30 days inside with a curtain in front of her bed. After returning to the house, the hood remained

on, although it was cut back little by little every ten days. For the next year the woman had to maintain food restrictions that all menstruating women had, and similarly could not cross trails or animals tracks or cross the river which would bring bad luck to the people in terms of game and fish. In addition, all menstruating women had to eat alone, cook for themselves, get their own water, and not go near anything belonging to a man: "They tell me, 'Don't do this, don't walk around, don't step over food. Bad luck.' I just sit."

It seems it was possible for a woman to "dream" at this time--to come into contact with supernatural powers--and face still another new role as a shaman. Reconstructed in my field notes, one informant expressed it in the following manner:

> "Just as soon as you woman, you dream." You're scared to wake up. You sleep again. "Anything could talk to you--stick, bear. You scared." She dreamed a bear was going after her, so she did what her mother had told her to prevent the bear from attacking her and she pulled her shirt revealing her breasts. "Then okay." The bear said for her to go with him. "I go. I scare, scare, scare, more scare. Even caribou talk to you, sheep, king salmon" and they tell you to do it. "You don't want to do it, but you have to do it."

Upon returning from the seclusion, a girl was not expected to play outdoors anymore. Following such a retreat, Guedon (1971: 294) expressed the shyness characteristic of girls at that time:

> To be shy, o'nit'cią, was considered good, and it took sometimes several weeks or months before the new woman accepted easily the company of other people, especially men.

Menarche, the Female Life Cycle and Oral Literature. The puberty seclusion of women among many Northern Athapaskan groups has been of ethnographic interest to anthropologists for some time. However, its incorporation and dramatization in certain myths of these people has gone unnoticed in the published anthropological literature. P. and E.K. Maranda (1971:16) point out that "folklore is unrecorded mentifacts" unlike artifacts which are their own record. Certain points in the female life cycle, especially the onset of menstruation, constantly brings not only the individual but also the community in contact with supernatural powers. This contact is most intense at menarche, although it occurs also at birth, subsequent menstruations, and death. At each one of these points the community shares a part by taboos, and is subject to the consequences of the female's actions. The powers present in the female at this time (or rather the powers that she has especially close contact with) must be carefully guared, for depending on their utilization they may bring success or destruction to the individual and/or community. How a woman will handle this potency to the advantage of the community and herself is culturally defined as shown above. The consequences, too, are apparent. The oral and mythical aspects of culture, gives people clues as to how to handle this special time. The structural relations, in turn, reveal relations not only between humans but also between them and subhumans and superhumans as well. The balance is a delicate one for all. Guidelines for behavior,

especially for the pubescent female can be found in the following story told by one informant. Two special instances were recalled in which the narrator had been told the story--when she was 7 or 8 years old and acting especially mischievous and when she first came to woman. The story was recorded in English on tape and then was put into a basic English like that employed by C. McClellan (1970). Certain phrases or words added to the story for clarification to the reader are in brackets.

> Two girls, just like you, they didn't listen. One, the older one. Always the younger sister is smart. The older is not too smart. They run. They try to kill that butterfly.
>
> "Butterfly, come down, come down." They whip it, they whip it. They keep following, following, following. Finally they go way up in the sky. They don't know. Then they try to go back. They're lost. They don't know where to go.
>
> "Where are we?" They can't find their way back. They start to cry. They walk, walk, walk, walk, walk. Then this bird comes to them. Chickadee they call it.
>
> He said, "Granddaughter, what are you crying for?" he said.
>
> "Lost. I try to find my family. I couldn't find them," she said.
>
> "Well, I'll show you. You go that way. There is a road. Go that way. There's two roads. One wide road--don't go. This narrow road--you go. Don't go that wide road--that's bad road, bad man in there. This narrow one--that's to your home. You'll be home there," he tells her.
>
> Finally they walk, walk, they eat berries. These girls give him, Chickadee, beads, earrings. (That's why it's white around here [gesture]. When he turned to a bird it was white there [gesture] and one sister gives him a necklace. That's why it has a collar necklace.) So they pay him.
>
> After they get there [gesture], "My grandpa said this way," the older one says.
>
> And the sister says, "My grandpa said this way" [gesture].

"Come on, please, please, come on." She grabs her. She's scared. She looks around. Just half-dog. Just half-dog. Half's gone but he's alive.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa." He [a man] grabs that big iron. He kills people with it. "Whoa, my dog." He spies somebody. He runs out. He looks. Two young girls. "Boy." He's happy right there.

And she said, "Come on." Right there. That older one. She doesn't even think. That half-dog barks at her and she doesn't even think anything. She just must be crazy. That young one she sees that half-dog and she thinks in her mind, "We run into trouble. I don't know what to do." There is an old lady on the side. I don't know if that was his mother or just a guard. I don't know.

"Why don't you stay with my grandmother?" [the younger asks].

"Me, I sleep with my grandpa." She'd been running around with men already. She thought men could have sex with her I guess. But she's making a mistake. They go to bed.

The old lady said, "You chew your blanket. You look through there. Your sister never will get up." He's going to kill her. "Stay awake all night," she told her, "don't sleep." All night that man, with a big piece of iron, sharp iron, puts it on the stove and heats it--red hot. Then he pulls her [older sister] legs apart. He keeps doing that. And this girl [younger sister] is getting scared. In the morning about 5 or 4:30. She's scared he might do that to her. And then he took the stick and went like that [gesture]. He heated it again for the [younger] sister.

Finally, "Grandma, going to get up?"

"Ya." They both get up.

"How long will my sister sleep? We're going to get berries. We saw big berries down there."

"She's too tired. Let her sleep." She's dead. Before noon, about 10 or 11.

"Hurry up. Get up. You sleep enough. We're going to pick berries."

"No, no," he said just like he owns her.

"I'll go alone then."

"No, no," he said. He didn't want her to go. He wanted to kill her that night.

"You think I'll leave my sister? I can't leave my sister. I'll come back. I'll pick berries, that's all."

"No. You get a rope and tie it on me. Long rope." So he ties a rope on her right here [waist].

And she tells the cotton tree, spruce tree, willow tree, all kinds of willow tree. She tells them, "Friend, you want to move this rope?"

"No, no, no."

"Friend, you want to move this rope?"

"No, no, no."

"Friend, you want to move this rope for me?"

"No, no, no."

"Friend, friend, please, please."

"No, no." They won't help her. That old birch bark. (That one I told you. They made bucket to put berries in there? Rotten one--birch bark.) "Friend, you want to move this for me?"

"Ya. Why?"

"I run into trouble. I can't get away. Don't let go. Just keep moving, moving till he pulls you."

"All right." Then she just runs to where the trail goes that way. She runs in there. Before she runs in there she thinks, "This narrow road. Grandma [a different grandma] used to stay in there. "Grandma, I run to you. I'm scared." That old lady tells her, "Before you get there say, 'Grandma, I run to you, I'm scared,' you say it you'll never see people. You just holler it to her," she told her. So she runs. "Grandma, I'm scared, I run to you, somebody is after me."

"Granddaughter, granddaughter, come on, hurry up. I can't see you. Get in that sack. Way back there. Way back in corner. Big sack there. Go inside there." So she goes in there. So she sits in there. Then that man he pulls it [the rope].

"H[illegible] long is she gone?" He pulls that rope. Rotten birch b[illegible] he pulls in. "Ai." He gets mad. He grabs that j[illegible]. "Did she go by here?"

'[illegible]arly in the morning she passed us." Those trees talk. He asks questions, all, all. Finally. (No, before she gets there,[to Grandma's] she runs into a lake. She doesn't know what to do. She can't cross. Finally, she tells the fox, "Please put your tail across for me. I want to go across."

"No, no, no." She's afraid that old man is going to come after her too.

"Pl[illegible]se, please, that man's going to kill me. Please. My mother's got something from that way. I'll give you that one. She's got fish eggs. My mother's got that kind of dry fish. My mother's got fish heads, rotten fish in the cache, all kinds of dry meat." Finally, she tells him she's got fish eggs and rotten fish heads mixed up.

"Why didn't you tell me that before?" So he puts his tail across and she runs across the tail and she gets

to the other side.

"Friend, that old lady over there, she never talks to anybody. Tell her, 'Grandma, I'm scared. I run to you. Somebody's going to get me.' That's all you tell her."

"Please friend, don't put your tail across for him if he comes after to cross. Don't do it, don't do it please. Please don't try to get him across."

"No." So she went.

"Grandma, I'm running after you, I'm scared, that man is going after me. He is trying to kill me."

"Granddaughter, come on, come on. The way back in the corner sack, you go in." So she goes in there.)

About half an hour she hears, "Wąą, wąą. Put your tail across for me."

"No, no, no."

"Hurry up. Hurry up. This thing [the iron] I'm going to put inside you."

"I'll run away from you, you can't catch me."

"I run faster than you."

Finally he puts his tail across. As soon as he [the man] gets on top of it, he [the fox] just pulls it out and he [the man] drowns. Then he comes out. He pulled his tail and then he ran away. He [the man] drowned and he didn't know how to swim. I don't know how he came out. And he tells that old lady, "Where is that girl who came to here? I smell her tracks. She came to your house."

"She never came. I don't see anybody."

"Hurry up. You tell me the truth. Hurry up." He stands in the door. "Hurry up. Tell me how."

"No. I don't see anybody here."

"I'll put this thing [the iron] in your hind end. Hurry up. Hurry up."

"Me too. When I look at you, your bones will just fall down. I never look at anybody. Don't try to come in."

"Hurry up." He just hollers.

The girl, "Gees!" in the sack. "Gee, I hope she doesn't let him in." Pretty soon, "Wąą, wąą." He just cusses and he tries to come in. She [grandma] just looks at him, "BZEH." He just turns to bones.

"Come on, Granddaughter, come on." She comes out. His bones over there. "Here, the stick," she tells her, "All kinds of berries," she tells her. Raspberries, cranberries, blueberries, high bush berries, rose berries, hillberries, black berries, and all kinds of berries. She calls their name, she just tells it like this, "Be berries, be berries," she tells her, "Just call like

this. You stir it up." Then she threw it, just the bones, in the lake.

Now, "Granddaughter, I've got four boys and they're out hunting. You fix yourself, paint yourself, fix your hair and go in that last sack, you were in. You sit in there." So she fixes herself and goes in and sits.

Pretty soon she hears, "Mama, mama, hẹ, hẹ. I got no more gun." His mother makes bow and arrow gun.

"I've got some in your sack." He starts to pull something out of the sack.

"What'd you put in there, mama?"

"I put lots in there."

"Oh gee. Too heavy." He looks. Nice looking girl there. He just holds. "Hee, ya-ya-ya. I found a wife. I found a wife."

"Hey, let's look, let's look, let' see her, let's see her." His three brothers [said].

"No, no, no. That's my wife. That's going to be my wife. No." Finally, they grab her out.

"That girl, she's just scared to death that she came here. I tried to help her out. Two. Two this side, two this side. Make this girl stay right in the middle. Four of you are going to be her husbands. Don't fight. You four brothers, never jealous. One sleep, this one, then next one. You do that every night. No fight."

"All right," he tells his brother. "All right, we'll do that. That'll be all right?"

Then the youngest one says, "All right, I don't care." Then she's got four husbands. Now they [the husbands] go out hunting everyday. They get all kinds of food.

That old lady is right there. Big rock. She goes out. "Granddaughter, don't touch this [the rock] one."

"No." So she goes out. She just wants her to touch it, so she goes out to the bathroom. [gesture] She couldn't move it [the rock]. So she goes back to sew. She makes her husbands' moccasins and pants and clothes and all different [things]. They kill them. She makes it clothes.

"Granddaughter?"

"Yah."

"I smell you went to my rock. You touch it?"

"Yah. I wonder what's that, so I tried to move it. I can't move it."

So with a little stick she [grandma] just moves it. "All right, you look," she says. Ah, there is her [the girl's] family--her mother, brothers, father. She looks so sad. "That's where we are. Way up on top of

the sky. We're on another earth way, way on top. That's where we are."

"My poor mother, father. They don't know my sister got killed." She talks to her and she just cries.

"Granddaughter, how come you're so quiet?"

"My mother, my father, my brothers are down there."

"You want to go down there?"

"Yah."

"Then you tell your husbands to bring all the sinew. 'All the sinew, that's all you bring,' you tell them. But make all the clothes--your husbands'. Lots of extra clothes. The moccasins, all, you make them. I'm getting too old. Make lots of them. Make the sacks full of them. Then I'll take you down." She must be a nice old lady. So, gee, this woman just works, works, works. She makes all extra clothes for all her husbands. Sacks full of them. This sinew she makes a long rope. She ties a stick on it and puts it down. It doesn't reach yet. So she pulls it up. Some more, more, more, some more, some more. Pretty soon it goes down to the ground. That old lady, she just cries. Finally she said, "Your husbands are going to kill me. I know that. Tomorrow, I don't know what time, they're coming home. You'll know that they're coming home. That's the time you'll see cloudy, snow, hail, snow, cloudy. That's when they'll kill me. Then you, you throw something between your legs. Moss. My grandma stuffed it. You throw it like this [gesture]. Go outdoors so nobody sees you." So she did that. Before that she ties a stick and she sits down on it. She pulls it down.

"Remember now what I tell you." She doesn't want the rope to go down to earth so she pulls it up. I don't know what she did with it. She threw it away, I guess. Then she put that rock back.

Early morning. And her brothers, the youngest one, and all her brothers. "Ho-eh." They make it tough themselves. The youngest one carries wood. "What's the matter. Stick, what happened?" He looks back. There is his sister. "You coming? Where's my sister?"

"I'll tell you after awhile. Where's Mom?"

"They're home."

"Well, I'm coming home now."

"You wait here." He runs home, "My sister, only one, Mama."

"Waą," she calls like that lots of times. She didn't believe it.

"I'll bring my sister's feathers." They had feathers right here [gesture]. Some kind of feather. So he runs. He took feathers out of his sister's.

He runs. And he shows his mother.

"Ah, my daughter." They all run out and meet her. They all cry right there. They asked her what happened to her sister.

"We ran into trouble. All like this." And she tells her all that story. "I ran into trouble. I tell my sister, 'That man, dayg̨ahka [chickadee], he tells us to go that way,' and my sister wants to go this way. Pretty soon half-dog barks at us and I tell her. And right there my sister didn't even--I don't know what happened to her. She wants to sleep with that man. And me, I sleep with Grandma. Then she [grandma] tells me to watch my sister and I did and oh I got scared. He just killed my sister. I saw it. There is no chance for her. It's just me. I come back."

Oh, they all cry. Then they make potlatch right there, with her. She got back. After that they tell all the people the news. The family they all come back and meet her. She didn't want to talk about it because she's broken-hearted. She told her mother. So her mother told them.

She sits in a tołta. That's what they call it. Like in the ground. Alone. Herself. She doesn't want to see people. She doesn't like to see anybody for awhile. She feels bad. She feels ashamed. She sits a long time there before some boys tell her, "Come on. Walk with us. Come on, be friends with us." They thought she was a stranger. She's scared. She saw the way it happened to her sister. She's scared. Finally, they are just friendly. That's the end of the story.

Boy's Puberty. Comparatively little information on a boy's puberty was obtainable. When a boy's voice was changing the boy had to wear mitts for 50 days or his hands would be "bad luck." He could not talk with women or look at them and had to cover his mouth when he laughed so that women would not see his teeth. Guedon (1971:281) noted for the Upper Tanana that the first kill of each species had to be given away and the parents gave a "potlatch" to the boy's cross-cousins and in-laws. One informant noted that the Salcha boy would give it to his

grandparents. It was added that Salcha boys who wanted sexual intercourse with women received the following instructions from their fathers:

> This man, his father say, "You can go to woman now. You want a woman, okay, you can use a woman that has one child." Then he asks him why and he says it is bad luck to go with a young girl.

Apparently, a girl received no such instruction.

Marriage. Lacking the ceremony surrounding marriage found in some other cultures, a man and woman formed a husband-wife team following the man's working for the woman's parents. Among the Salcha, both parents observed the young man who worked two years for the woman's parents but if he was an especially good working man he only worked one year. Sometimes two potential spouses would stay and work and the better worker received marriage approval:

> Father and mother look at two man, too. See how he takes care. Mother- and father-in-law watch for the kind of game he kill. Kill too much black bear then he won't last long. Bear might kill him. Don't want daughter widow too soon.

Both parents were involved in the decision and looked for versatility in food acquisition capabilities. The man who would go out and pick berries for the old people made an impression. Since a woman's husband often looked after her mother when her mother's husband died, it is likely that the mother had a vested interest in the abilities of her son-in-law. Nevertheless, the father certainly had his interests, too, as the two men would be

accompanying each other in various economic pursuits. Residence tended to be matrilocal, if not in the woman's house then nearby, although there was freedom in post-marital residence as well. A man looked for certain qualitites in a woman, industriousness being highly valued. A woman who worked skins well and was an overall good worker was considered a good woman. Meanness and stinginess were qualities which were devalued in any individual including spouses. Often the two formed a closely working team and this was expressed especially in relation to the fish camp. On occasion, I was emphatically told that "man and woman work together." From all indications that I could derive, husbands and wives ideally had egalitarian relationships with each other and, in valuing personal freedom and independence in general, valued these qualities in a personal relationship as well. Guedon (1971:304) was impressed with the closeness and independence she discerned from husband-wife bonds among the Upper Tanana:

> Husband and wife could form a very close association and at the same time could conserve or acquire a certain independence from each other. The man spent a good deal of time in the woods, and the women would stay home; but the women were also able to spend several days or weeks in the woods or the fish camp all by themselves. Also, each of them had his own tools and utensils, and personally disposed of his own wealth in beads, furs and now cash. As a result, every older native has a life of his own, a personal outlook on life, and a particular understanding of the native traditions.

In the following two stories, the conflict between consanguineal and affinal relations is clearly brought out. In addition, the

latter reveals the latitude given to spouses in doing as they please.

> And she goes fishing. Her mother goes fishing every year--Big Delta. And a young girl. She grows up since. She's scared of frog. "Bai, bai, bai, bai. I have cache way up on top so frog can't climb up." He slips way up on top of cache. Pretty soon she comes to woman and still she never steps on the ground. She can't. She's afraid frog will step on her. Scared all the time. So finally, nighttime, frog man comes. July. A nice looking man is coming. He said, "What are you doing up there?"
>
> "Nothing much. I just sit here." She looks at him. Gee, he's a good looking man. She's pretty too. "What are you doing?"
>
> "Oh, I walk all over the country. How come you stay way up there?" Nahrii. We call nahrii--frog.
>
> "I'm scared of nahrii. That's why I stay up here."
>
> "Nahrii, nahrii. What kind is that, nahrii? I don't know nahrii."
>
> "Nahrii. You know nahrii."
>
> "I don't know." He sits there with her and talks and talks and finally, "I marry you, huh?"
>
> "Gee. Good looking man is telling me."
>
> "I marry you?"
>
> "Yah. All right."
>
> "You go with me?"
>
> "Yah." He has nice canoe. That canoe. So she jumps in canoe and goes with him. She doesn't know it is frog man. Big Delta, they go across. Her mother is fishing everyday. And big hill other side (where bridge is, right there) underneath, water. "Come see like this, don't look."
>
> "Why?'
>
> "I'm going to show you my home," he tells her. So she crosses. She comes in. Gee, big house. She never even gets up. She sits in that boat. How did she get in? Beads. All kinds of beads. Long beads. Before he came in he tells all his family to turn to all like man so his girl won't be scared. "I have girl," he tells them, he tells his family. So she sits there and he talks and talks and finally he is using her and pretty soon she's going to have a baby. And she has a baby. I don't know how many a frog has I don't know. Finally, when she has a baby and birth is coming, nothing but frogs. And she sees it. Then he told her, "I'm frog man. I'm your husband. You're going to turn to a frog woman. You're going to be my

wife. You can't go back to your family. You're going to turn to frog. Then you're going to swim around. Then you can go back to your family after you turn to frog."

So she had a baby and she told her. Her mother cries, cries, cries. She cuts fish. And she tells her kids, "You see that old lady crying over there?"

"Yah."

"That's your grandma. You ask her for fish eggs. You go around. You tell her, 'Grandma, give me fish eggs. Grandma, give me fish eggs,' tell her. She'll give you fish eggs," she tells them. So they go around, "Grandma, give me fish eggs, give me fish eggs, fish eggs, fish eggs, Grandma, Grandma, Grandma." Finally, she gets in her mind. She tells them, "Hey, come on. Those frogs talk to me. They say, 'Grandma, fish eggs, fish eggs.' My girl used to be afraid of frogs, how come the young frogs call me 'Grandma?' Maybe frog got my daughter?" she said.

Finally and they figure it up and she grabbed one. They tie a red one on this way and they put feathers on them and they go with them. They paddle canoe. They go. They swim across to where their mother is, then watch a bunch of people. This is where they sit. They go in the boat there and they hear a noise that's all down there. Then he tells his mother, "Grandma [mother-in-law?] comes behind me. She's up there." Then she says, "Mother."

She heard. "Yah."

"I belong to frogs now. I'm married to frog. You tell all your family. All my brothers, all my aunts. All come over here." So she tells all her family to go over there. She knows what day. So she tells her mother, "Close your eyes. Close your eyes."
She comes in. Nothing but frogs. Her daughter is half frog. So she just gets scared. She doesn't know what to do.

Then the man says, "I'm the one that has your daughter. She's going to be my wife now. I'm buying my wife now. I'm paying. Tomorrow, next day. You come around here. I'll give you all those beads to all your family," he tells her.

So next day they went, "That man tells me like this." They all go there so they all cross to the other side. They all come in. Gee, beads. They haul it home. They haul it home. They [frog's family] get nothing. Then next day her mother goes there just for a visit and all over again. She got it all over again. That's the end of the story.

* * *

So springtime. Ducks come. Eh-h. He goes to lake and there is pretty girl. He hunts for ducks. Man. Really ordinary man. And he hunts for ducks. Pretty girl swims in the lake. That is ducks. And he sees her clothes. He takes them. And he holds them there and watches her and she swims along. He just has a good time down there in the lake. Finally, she comes out to get her clothes. Half way and she sees the man.

She says, "Give me my clothes."

"What are you doing yourself around here?"

"I just go around, around here and all over the country."

"Where's all your family?"

"They're around some place. I don't know where," she tells him. Finally, she says, "I want my clothes."

"I'll give you your clothes if you want to talk to me for a little while."

"Yah. Turn your back and I'll put on my clothes." So he gives her her clothes. Turns around. Turns his back. "All right." He looks back. Nice looking girl. He grabs her hand and holds her. Talks to her. "I like you for my wife."

"You, what do you do?" she asks him.

"I got my mother. My mother's old. I take care of my mother and I have no wife. I'm looking for a wife. You want to be my wife?"

"I don't know. I don't stay in one place. I can't be a wife." She means she looks for something to eat. She flies around. She doesn't eat our food. She can't tell him.

"Well, that's all right. You can do what you want and I'll hunt game. You stay with me."

"All right. We'll try it. You don't like me and I don't like you, we'll disappear."

"All right." Gee, he dresses her with the long beads, white beads. He dresses her pretty. He looks at his wife. Gee, she's pretty. And finally, she's got a baby and she had a baby and they go down to the lake. They turn to ducks. They swim. She teaches her baby how to swim. Just little, young, little ducks. She dives in the water and everything and he doesn't know. Then they come out. They put on their clothes. Just like a man they come back. "Where's Daddy?"

"He's hunting." Then she tells him to stay home with Grandma. She goes out. The baby's hungry. He cries. No. Baby, small, he cries. He wants breast and "Aeh-h-h-h-h, where did you go?" The old lady finds out she is ducks woman [dehtsen tsaghe].

"Where the heck did she go?" Her husband asks his mother.

"She went for rotten grass. For doggone rotten grass," she tells him with her language. "She wants rotten grass, springtime rotten grass." She [ducks woman] was just coming home. She heard that. She doesn't talk. She doesn't say anything. She gives her baby something to eat and she sits down. Her husband talks, talks. Girl's alive and never talks. "What happened to you? What's wrong? What's the matter?"

"Nothing, nothing." Never says anything. They just walk around together. Finally, next day, go out hunting. All summer--June, July, August. Three months. Then comes September. She dresses. She goes down to the lake and tells her boy, "Let's go swimming. Go swimming. We're going to leave your daddy. That way your grandma is no good. She doesn't like us. We're ducks. Your grandma is Indian. Your daddy's Indian. so we are not. We belong to ducks."

And that boy, "I don't want to leave Daddy. I don't want to leave Daddy," he says. Still she takes him and they go up to south where they go.

She sits there and he comes home. He comes home and, "Where's my wife?"

"Oh, she took the boy and went out," the old lady says. She looks on the lake and there are their clothes. Baby's clothes, her clothes. He says, "They're gone." He looks all over. He can't find them. She turns to ducks and she flies away. He knows that his wife was ducks. He makes that kind of handle--axe handle, knife handle--something. (I don't know what they use way back.) So he follows. He walks up that way. He sees village. He asks. He comes in, "You see my wife pass here?" Nobody talks. He threw one like this.

"Yah. About 2 or 3 months she passed here." He paid them that way. He keeps walking, walking. Next place, same way. He asks them. Nobody talks. So he threw like this again. Keeps going, keeps going. Last, he has two last ones. If he runs out what is he going to do? He figures. He asks them. Nobody talks. So he threw that kind.

"Yah. About this afternoon, when she left here. Has little boy with her."

"How am I going to get there?"

"How are you going to get there? Pretty hard. They'll kill you. You can't go there. Swan and all

kinds of ducks. So he doesn't know what to do. "I'll tell you what to do. Your boy has a fish trap. That kind trap. You go in your boy's trap. I'll put you in fish. You turn to fish and I'll put you in trap. Fish skin. Then when your boy takes you out you tell him to take you back, way in the shade, brush brush. Then you turn. You know how to tear this one," he tells him.

"Yah. Okay. Thnak you." Then he gives another stick. So he went to where his boys net, fish trap was. He sits in there. He wants, hurry up, his boy to come. He hears him coming. He looks at his boy. Gees, big boy. He grabs his daddy and throws in that boat. All the fish he puts.

"Me first, pick me up," he's thinking. So he picks him up/ He looks at him. Good fish. Big fish. "I wish he packs me way back in the shade." So he packs way back in the shade. He puts in there. He cuts open. After he puts there, "Sdene'?" he says, "Son?" He looks. He thought he got a fish. "Gee. Daddy." He grabs him. "Tell Mama I come here."

"Okay."

"Don't tell anybody, just your mama." So he runs home and he makes song, "Hey-ya-ah, hey-ya-ah, hey-ya-ah." He doesn't say anything. He has some kind of song he sings. His mother says, "Something wrong?"

He comes. He is going to tell her. "Mom, my daddy came back. My papa is going to get, he puts stick up like this and he grabs him."

"What'd he say, what'd he say?" And all the uncles and brothers ask.

"I don't know what he says." And she took him out. "What'd you say?"

"My daddy is going to come behind us." He has blanket over him and he walks down.

"Dear, dear husband. How are you going to get in the house? They'll kill you." She doesn't know what to do. Finally, and it gets a little bit dusk, and they take him in. They put blankets over him and they take him in the house, tsolta. Big house, they call it, way back. That's where they keep him. She hides him in there. Finally, in the morning she kills her own ducks. One or two. Her husband is starving. She kills young chicken. Young ducks I guess. I don't know. And nighttime she cooks it for her husband. She feeds her husband that way to keep him alive. Finally, and he wants to go out to pee so he goes out. Way, lots of eggs! All kinds of eggs. Biggest, he picks up and boils it, while his wife

sleeps where he stays.

And in the morning, "My kids are gone. Way-y-y. My kids are gone. Way-y-y." Everybody cries.

"Husband."

"Uh-huh."

"Husband, is that you?"

"No. What kind of kids? The eggs are all picked up?"

"Yah. That's the kids. They might kill you." So they don't know what to do. Finally, everything is over after that. She doesn't know what to say. She tells him to go home. But he wouldn't go home. So she tells her family--her father, and mother, and uncle, her brothers, her sisters, and uncle and grandpa--all one family.

"You know, your brother-in-law came behind me. That's his boy right here. I don't know what to do. I can't send him home. He doesn't want to go home."

Then he's a big-shot him--that old man. So he goes out. He makes a speech, "My daughter's husband came behind her kid. We can't let him go. We all have to try to be friends with him. Try to make ducks out of him. Like us. Make him learn how to fly," he tells them.

"All right, all right." Gee, they're all scared a little bit. They're different and they're ducks. Every day they put feathers, feathers, feathers, feathers. Every day. One to each feather. They give him feather, feather. "Now you fly." He flies. He just fell down. Oh about two or three months, finally, he flies. He flies way up in the air. His brother-in-law is with him watching. He's going to fall down, then he grabs him. He flies with him. Gee. All over the ocean. All over. Good.

"Gee, brother-in-law, you are doing good. I'm thankful you fly good," he says. Now you are going to be our brother-in-law. You eat like we eat now." They show him how to eat just like ducks. No different. Just like a meal. No more does he bother eggs, no more does he bother that. He lives with them.

Then he comes to Alaska. He flies back for his mother, but he doesn't see his mother. I guess she died. She died, so he doesn't know. He left her when he walked up that way. Many years. So he doesn't know what happened to her. He turned to ducks so she didn't know. He's scared to be around. He's going to get killed. All the people are looking for ducks. He's scared to be around, so he stays away from natives' village. He sticks with his wife all the way through.

> He tells his wife, he tells her, "You be careful because they're going to kill you. Be smart," he tells her. That's the end of the story.

* * *

Old Age and Death. The older people, with no one to take care of them, were, as noted above, members of the population who suffered. Older people often lived by themselves by setting snares for small game. The post-childbearing years for a woman allowed her a new freedon and she was no longer subject to the numerous taboos that accompanied the life of the childbearing woman. Older people made their contributions as educators of the young and as storehouses of genealogical knowlege. Many old people contributed by their handiwork--the making of snowshoes, basketry or the manufacture of other material objects.

When a person died their dwelling was abandoned and their personal belongings were destroyed. The body, traditionally, was cremated with cross-relative tending to the body and/or burial. The person who performed the cremation was ideally confined for 100 days after the cremation and subject to many taboos such as not eating fresh meat or fish and eating one's own food. The bones were put in a sack which was hung on a spruce "cross" or pole. The sack also contained one's sewing or hunting paraphernalia. Following death for five days, food was tossed in the fire:

> When they die, they travel. You go down in the ground. You don't know where to go. Two roads. They try to find that road. They're hungry so you put food on

> fire, then they find their way. Medicine man dreams. He tells us. When you sin too much you sit down on another earth and you don't know where to go. Then somebody calls and you go.

For some people, death was not the end of a life on this earth, but a transition since some were reincarnated. In returning, these people could change sex and of the few cases recalled to me, they were all men--some were reincarnated as a male, some as a female. The junior informant is the reincarnated person of her mother's brother. There was no announcing dream associated with the reincarnation. Her mother explained it in this manner:

> Just before he die he just holler, holler. Look at me all the time. "Sister, sister." As soon as he finds he's in there--ghost. Then he's not scared no more [to die].

Later, her daughter added that, "as soon as he die he get into her stomach and then she's pregnant. Don't sleep. Just like you scared." The reincarnated woman also exhibits a large birthmark where her mother's brother had "put his finger." Several to ten years following death the funeral was concluded by the giving of a potlatch, given by close relatives to thank visitors and "pay" the persons who took care of the burial. This event involved the ceremonial exchange of goods, communal feasting, composition and singing of "sorry songs," as well as singing the potlatch song and the more lively "happy songs." I do not include a description here of recent or reconstructed potlatches of this type. Guedon's (1971) study of the Upper Tanana Indians provides

an excellent description of all types of gatherings which are called "potlatch" including the type following a death. I have little to add to her detailed description and typology in terms of what I have gathered for the Salcha for the past and what I have observed in recent years at potlatches among the Tanana and Upper Tanana Indians. After the potlatch, it was considered that the living had fulfilled their obligations to the dead and spouses were eligible for remarriage.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS: DELINEATION OF THE SALCHA BAND

The basic task of this paper has been a reconstruction of Salcha culture, focusing particularly on the food quest and the social culture. While the emphasis has not been comparative, the following discussion presents a comparative framework in order to delineate the position of the Salcha band among east central Alaskan Athapaskans. This chapter contains a delineation of the Salcha band and a review and discussion of classifications of the Tanana River, based on geographic, linguistic, and sociocultural criteria. The position of the Salcha band relative to other Northern Athapaskan bands along the Tanana River is discussed. Although no final statement can be made at this time concerning the sociocultural divisions of the Tanana River as a whole, the placement of the Salcha band within the larger grouping has raised several questions regarding the most useful delineation of groups along the Tanana River for anthropologists.

The Salcha Band

At what point in time a grouping of individuals in central Alaska can be termed a village population is difficult to say. If a "village" population is characterized by a sedentary life style throughout most of the year (or greater than six months), it is certain that when people gathered together and began to maintain such a life style would vary from group to

group. The location of a trading post nearby might result in less nomadism for some, but not necessarily all, individuals of a band and in later years the establishment of missions had the same effect. It would seem then that nearby white establishments would result in differential cultural change from group to group, not only in terms of the onset of change, but in terms of the nature of change, depending on the character of the contact agents--traders, missionaries, etc.

As noted previously, McKennan (1969:95-96) considers the 1880's as marking the beginning of white contact for the Upper Tanana natives and the beginning of semipermanent settlements along the river arising with the establishment of the missions: Nenana (1907), Chena (1908), Salcha (1909), Tanana Crossing (1912). However, ethnographic data show that these people came together as a group at certain times of the year prior to the missions (cf. McKennan 1959; Guedon 1971). They came together to exploit the summer fish runs and the spring and fall caribou migrations, as well as for mid-winter festivities. Also, Guedon (1971:65), describing the semi-nomadic life style of some Upper Tanana groups, determined a type of "village" for those groups--a place where people congregated in the summer and returned to in mid-December:

> This camp was also the site of potlatches. Finally, it was almost always occupied, if not by whole families, at least by the older people. This settlement then stands out as a main center of activity and a meeting place. For this reason and

> to distinguish it from other camps, we will use the term "village" to designate it. The villages themselves were not necessarily fixed and could be removed....

Since most population observations were made during the fish camp grouping, that group was called the village or band by observers (traders, explorers, adventurers) and represented the closest approximation to a village life style that the Indians assumed prior to the missions or trading posts in their area. This particular grouping has been called the band by ethnographers. However, there is still much controversy regarding what constitutes a band (Damas 1969) and this subject for east central Alaska deserves some attention here.

The 1965 conference on Band Societies in Ottawa attempted to establish criteria for the identification of bands. Aspects in the delineation of band societies included the problem of aggregation, name identification of bands and territoriality, common language, resources and territoriality, biological and economic viability of bands and the size of band territories (Damas 1969:198-209). It was determined there and elsewhere (Helm 1965) that Steward (1955) and Service (1962) were in error in delineating Northern Athapaskans as composite bands. In addition, east central Alaskan Athapaskans were not included in their studies. My data for the Salcha as well as data for other Tanana River Indians (McKennan 1959; Olson 1968; Guedon 1971) indicate that the band was composite in that two or more

families were involved. However, the families are related by kinship ties. Unlike Service's (1962:63) criteria, there existed band exogamy, suggested matrilocal residence and matrilineality.

The local band in east central Alaska is structurally different than the local band as described by Helm (1965, 1968) for the Arctic Drainage Dene. The local band which Helm described is characterized by duration through time for a few years or a generation and structured around a focal or dominant family forming a distinct local kin group. McKennan (1969:100) regards the difference as being due to unilineal descent and "greater geographic mobility" in east central Alaska. Also, as McKennan (1969:104) has emphasized, aggregation was very important at the local band level in east central Alaska since it was this group which came together in large assemblies at fish weirs or caribou fences and the summer fishing band and the winter hunting band were composed of essentially the same people. McKennan suggested that this grouping was the basic and most significant social unit beyond the nuclear family. Also, McKennan found that although personnel were fluid, this social unit had duration through time and a roughly defined territory. I might add that it is probably at this level that the group had a social identity as a "people."

In Guedon's (1971) study, the Upper Tanana Indians defined themselves in terms of the local band whose cohesion was asserted

at potlatches. I would like to add that I observed this at recent potlatches in east central Alaska. Even though today in Alaska a concept of Tanana Indians as a whole is expressed by the Indians, the people tend to sit according to their band affiliation: Minto, Nenana, Tanacross, Tetlin, Northway. Guedon's (1971:37) informants consistently referred to groups of local bands by name/location and could not designate a larger group. The only unit that her Tetlin informants could designate as a grouping larger than the local band included the people beyond the Salcha which they called "different people." She (1971:206-208) did, however, find native designations for smaller groups which she calls primary, secondary and tertiary families. These were based respectively on "people sharing the same house"--parents, siblings, spouse, children; the "camp"--parallel cousins and siblings children as well but not affines; and "close relatives"--all consanguineal relatives. The functions of these families as a part of the local band give insight into the interdependency and unity of the local band as a sociocultural unit.

Because of the nature of the present sociocultural reconstruction of the Salcha, such local band subdivisions were not so apparent. The Salcha and Goodpaster local bands, who spoke exactly the same dialect, had definite areas associated with each group in spite of occasional intermarriages and fluidity of movement between the bands as well as reciprocal hunting and

fishing arrangements. Neighboring and more distant bands were called by band name/location. Identity for themselves and others was not from the larger territorial range, but from the local band and its constituent units as outlined by Guedon above. As McClellan (Damas 1969:200) found with the Southern Tutchone "they name a definite locality and that while they are dimly aware of the larger territory they rarely designate it." This perspective is important because it reveals that the people could look behond their own local groups, but the larger grouping and territory was not the focus of identity. Also, the local band in east central Alaska has duration through time for generations.

In combining my data with Guedon's (1971:19) it appears that at the beginning of the twentieth century there were at least eight such local bands occupying the Tanana River between the White and Salcha rivers: Chisana-Upper Nabesna, Nabesna, Tetlin, Last Tetlin, Mansfield-Ketchumstuk, Healy Lake, Goodpaster and Salcha.

The delineation of the Salcha local band relative to other bands along the Tanana River, which is discussed in further detail below, was based primarily on the basis of name identification, resources, and territoriality. Those people who utilized the resources and territory discussed earlier (an area of approximately 2400 square miles) constituted the Salcha band. Not all members used all areas nor did all the same people come together

each year at the midwinter festival, fish camp or fall and spring meat camps. Personnel were fluid and the band was not necessarily a permanent sociocultural unit. Around 1900, the population of the Salcha band was approximately 33.

Geographic Division of the Tanana

In 1898, A.H. Brooks conducted a geologic and geographic survey of the Tanana River. The river is formed by the junction of the Nabesna and Chisana rivers and the valley itself, according to Brooks (1905:82), is some 400 miles in length. He (1905:83) describes the valley as being composed of three physiographic provinces reviewed in Chapter 3 (Fig. 6). In terms of native populations, it is clear that the bands included in the Upper Tanana by McKennan (1959) would fall within Brooks' "upper Tanana." The Tanacross (Mansfield), Ketchumstuk, Healy Lake and Goodpaster groups would belong to the physiographic "middle Tanana," and all the other groups of the Tanana, including both Tanana and Koyukon speakers--Salcha, Chena, Nenana/Wood River, Minto, Tolovana, Crossjacket, and Manley Hot Springs--would all constitute bands of the "lower Tanana." The linguistic data reviewed below indicate that these geographic divisions are not useful for the anthropologist in terms of delineating significant sociocultural units for the Tanana River.

Linguistic Divisions of the Tanana

Allen, in 1885 (1900:450), divided the Tanana on the basis of native terminology. As mentioned earlier, he noted at Delta

Creek that the natives there were the first to call the river by the name Tananah, while upriver it had been called Nabesna (Fig. 7). Unfortunately, Allen did not encounter any Indians between Mansfield and Delta Creek. It cannot be assumed, then, that bands upriver from Delta Creek (e.g., Goodpaster, Healy Lake) would call the river Nabesna.

M. Krauss' intensive study of the last 15 years of the Alaskan native languages is currently in press. From his research, he (personal communication) has determined four Athapaskan "language groups" for the Tanana River (Fig. 8). The following information is derived from his conclusions (personal communication). Beginning upriver, the Upper Tanana language group includes speakers of the Tanacross (Mansfield), Healy Lake and Ketchumstuk dialects. Krauss included Goodpaster in this group since the last two survivors who married and resided upriver have currently adopted the Tanacross dialect. Formerly, however, the Goodpaster dialect would have been included in the Tanana language group. The Tanana language group includes the Salcha, Chena, Minto-Nenana dialects as far as Tolovana. The language group of the extreme lower Tanana is that of Koyukon. In spite of the recognition of linguistic groupings such as these, Krauss' (1973:943) view of Northern Athapaskan in general, and this certainly applies to central Alaska, is that "Athapaskan must be viewed as a dialect complex" and not a group of discrete languages. In short, linguistic differences build up across

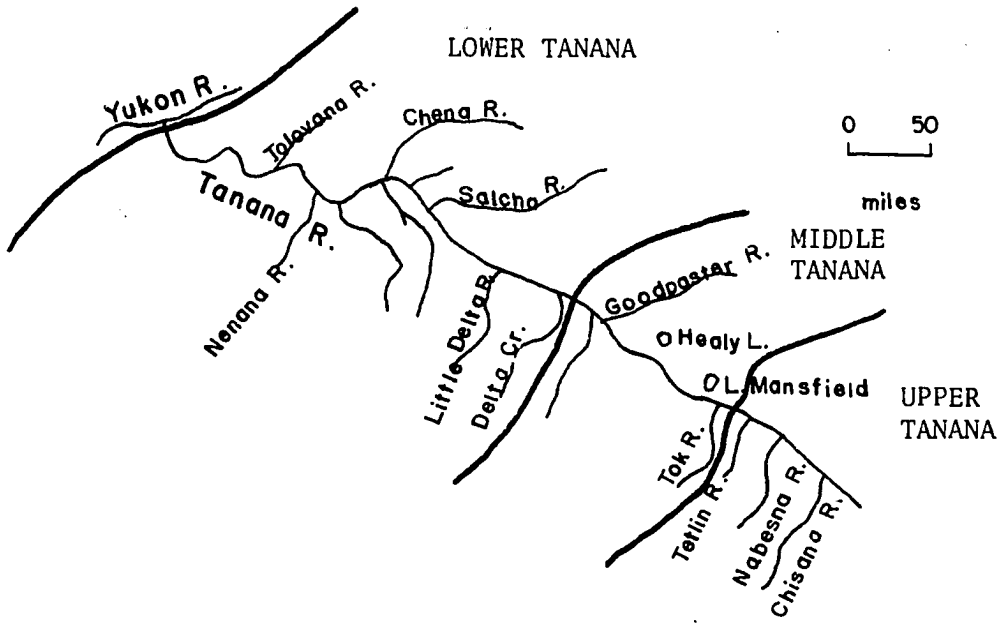


Fig. 6. Geographic Division of the Tanana River (Brooks 1905)

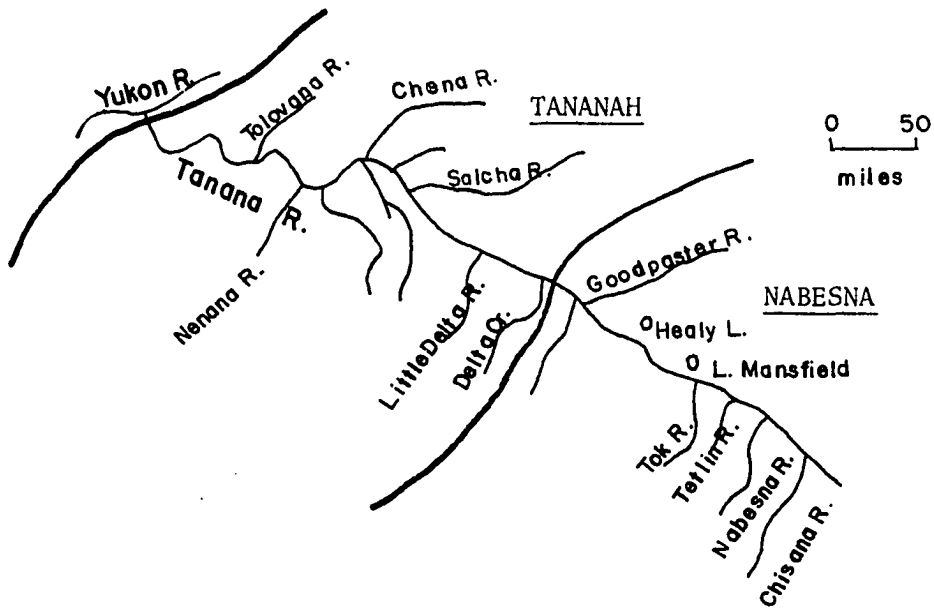


Fig. 7. Linguistic Division of the Tanana River (Allen 1900)

space and this is important to keep in mind when looking at the Tanana socioculturally. Along the Tanana only two major linguistic breaks occur--between the Tanacross and Tanana groups and between the Tanana and Koyukon groups. The linguistic groups do not correspond with the goegraphic subdivisions suggested by Brooks (1905) with the possible exception of the Upper Tanana language group and the upper Tanana geographic zone. Furthermore, the linguistic break is not as clear cut as the geographic. According to the Salcha informants, it is fairly easy to understand and communicate verbally with individuals downriver to Minto and upriver to and including Tanacross.

Sociocultural Divisions of the Tanana

Based somewhat on their geographic subdivisions, Peters and Brooks (1899:74) suggested three major groupings of Indians along the Tanana (Fig. 9): "those living near the Tok and Tetling rivers," "those of the Middle Tanana, living near the Volkmar [now Goodpaster] and Delta rivers," and "those of the lower river whose scattered settlements extend about 170 miles up the river" from the confluence with the Yukon. Such groups as the Chena, Salcha, Healy Lake and even the Chisana bands seem to be unaccounted for in this scheme. In a later report of the same expedition, Brooks (1900:491) presented the first twofold classification of the river based on the availability of a salmon resource (Fig. 10). The "Lower Tanana" Indians (whose largest villages were at the Cantwell and Toclat rivers) had access to salmon which

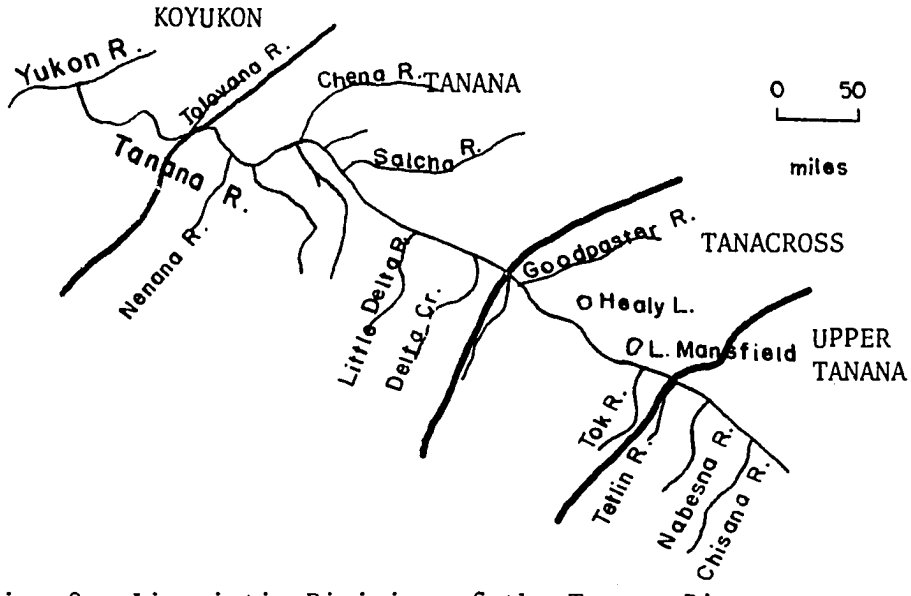


Fig. 8. Linguistic Division of the Tanana River Indians (Krauss 1974).

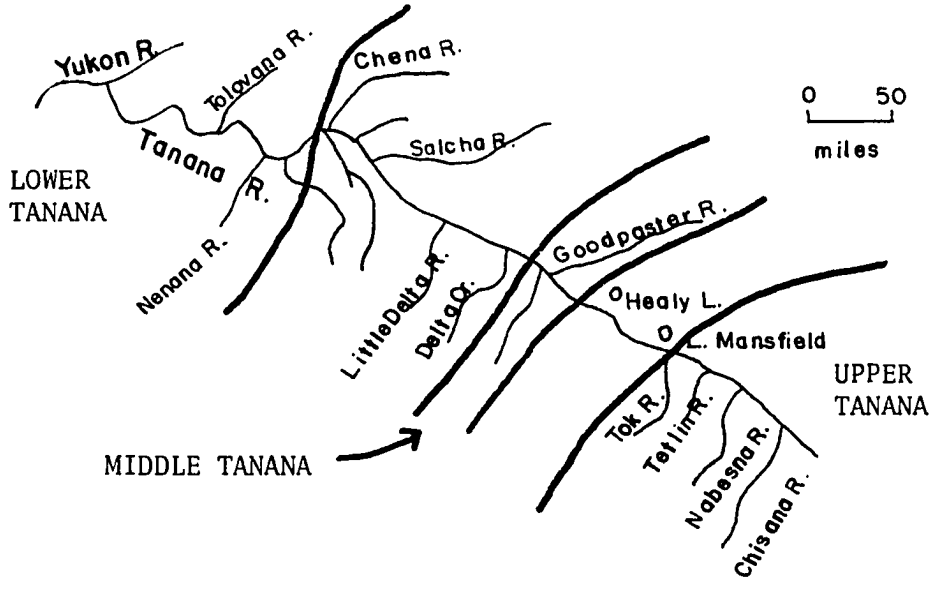


Fig. 9. Sociocultural Division of the Tanana River Indians (Peters and Brooks 1899).

Brooks (1900:491) erroneously believed did not extend as far as the Salcha. The "Upper Tanana" (in the vicinity of Lake Mansfield and Tetlin River) did not have a salmon resource. In this report, Brooks stated that the Salcha and Goodpaster bands were a subgroup of the Upper Tanana Indians.

C. Osgood's (1936) classification of Northern Athapaskans also suggests a twofold cultural division based in part on the availability of salmon. The two groupings suggested were those of the Pacific Drainage, characterized by a dependence on salmon, more stable shelter, and a unilateral kinship system and those of the Arctic Drainage, with no salmon, less stable shelter, and a bilateral kinship system (Osgood 1936:21). With such a broad twofold classification many exceptions would be expected to appear, such as McKennan's (1959) Upper Tanana who do not possess more stable shelter nor have access to a salmon resource. Osgood (1936:15.19) also presented a twofold classification for the Tanana (Fig. 11) based on McKennan's 1929-30 field work. The "Nabesna" were those groups upriver from the Tok River to the White River. The "Tanana" included all those from the Tok to the mouth of the Tanana and included some bands on the Yukon above the junction of the Tanana with the Yukon River.

In McKennan's (1959:15-17) study of the inhabitants of the upper portion of the Tanana River, he delineated the "Upper Tanana" as including those Indian bands of the Nabesna and Chisana rivers down the Tanana to the Tok River, suggesting the term

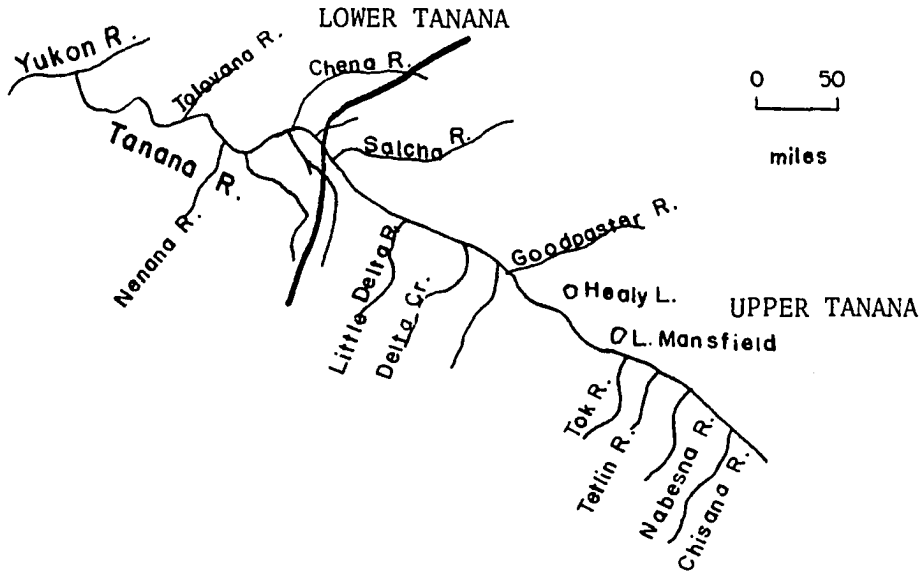


Fig. 10. Sociocultural Division of the Tanana River Indians (Brooks 1900).

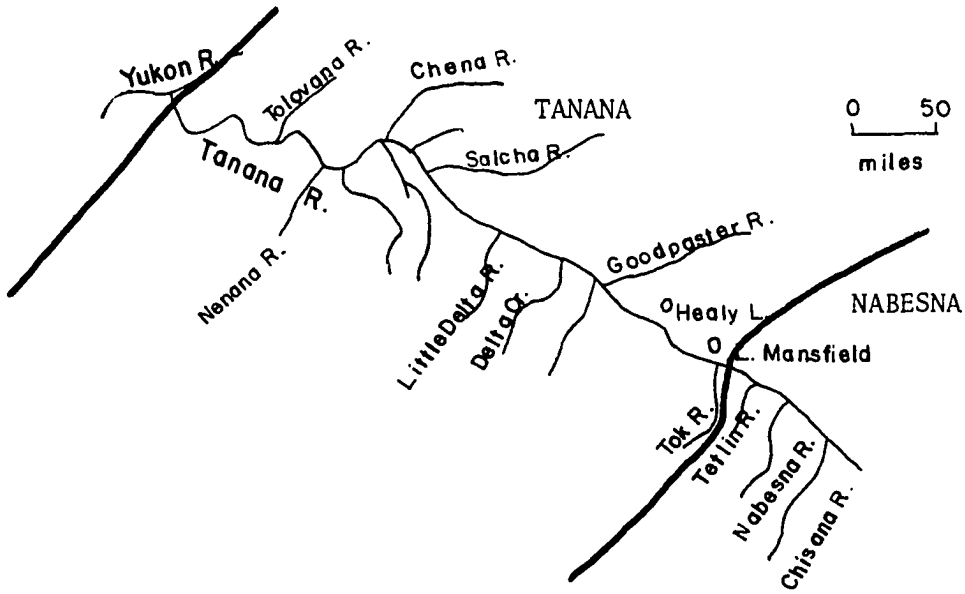


Fig. 11. Sociocultural Division of the Tanana River Indians (Osgood 1936).

"Nabesna" should be dropped because of its association with the Nabesna River. McKennan (1959:23) noted that Tanacross posed somewhat of a problem in his grouping since he saw no reason why geographically "the two groups should not be much the same, and as a matter of fact they do share a similar culture." McKennan, however, maintained that because of traditional cleavages and the aboriginal warfare between the groups he thought Tanacross and those groups upriver from the Tok should be separate in his classification. He (1959:23) did suggest, that in the context of the entire Tanana River he would lump Tanacross with his Upper Tanana, but that the occurrence of rapids between Tanacross and Healy Lake and Big Delta and Fairbanks gave him reason to exclude any other groups further downriver. Guedon (1971:35), however, has pointed out that there were native trails between Mansfield and camps below.

After a brief ethnographic survey of the Tanana River in 1962, McKennan attempted to subdivide the rest of the Tanana socioculturally (Fig. 12). He (1970:316) delineated three ecological divisions in terms of salmon availability which he felt were reflected in the band cultures as one moved along the river. The "upper Tanana" (as distinguished from his earlier Upper Tanana) included all bands above the Goodpaster River, none of which had the salmon resource. The "Middle or Transitional Tanana" included bands occupying the area from and including the Goodpaster to somewhere above the Chena where salmon were taken

in specialized weirs and traps in clearwater streams flowing into the Tanana from the north (McKennan 1970:317). At that time, McKennan (Ibid.) thought that ethnographic and linguistic data permitted the grouping of the middle and upper subdivisions. It is unclear what criteria are the basis for the twofold socio-cultural division. The linguistic data now do not support such a grouping. The lower river grouping which includes inhabitants to the mouth of the Tanana similarly may permit an ethnographic consolidation, but not a linguistic one. In addition, the fact that McKennan (1970:316) determined his subdivisions partially on the salmon resource does not coincide with his central Alaskan subsistence theme:

> The same big game animals--caribou, moose and mountain sheep--are found throughout the area, and I have already argued that hunting was of primary importance in pre-contact times.

In a more recent study of the native groups at Tanacross, Tetlin and Last Tetlin, Guedon (1971) also dealt with the question of which groups should be called "Upper Tanana." She (1971:35) approached the problem essentially from a native point of view and found that for the Indian "the opposition between 'Upper Tanana' and 'Tanacross-Mansfield' was not too important, not important enough maybe to justify completely a separate name for the 'Upper-Tanana.'" She (1971:37) determined, too, that all informants agreed that all people from Salcha on were "'different people' and designated by a special term." It may

be, that Goodpaster (as Krauss also found linguistically) and possibly Salcha are currently grouped in the native mind with the more upriver settlements because of the dissolution of these two bands early in this century and the relocation of many band members in the upriver settlements. From an emic point of view, then, Tanacross-Mansfield would certainly be in a larger "Upper Tanana" subdivision which possibly extended downriver to the Salcha (Fig. 13).

While Guedon's informants refer to people beyond the Salcha as "'different people'" it is still questionable whether they would refer to all people between the Salcha and themselves as "like us" or even designated by a special term as well. The large unit which Guedon (1971:37) designates as "Upper Tanana" includes all bands from Scottie Creek to Healy Lake (Fig. 14). In terms of the current situation, she (1971:29-30) also designates an Upper Tanana grouping socioculturally with reference to native life styles which are today only divided by white influences:

> Today, the three villages of Tetlin, Northway and Tanacross form with Dot Lake, Midway Lake, Scottie Creek and of course the few native families living at Tok, an indissoluble cultural and social unit... Paradoxically, the natives are more divided by white influences and institutions than they are by their own culture.

In a more recent classification of Alaskan Athapaskans, Graburn and Strong (1973:76) present a threefold scheme based on subsistence patterns. Briefly, their (1973:75) three

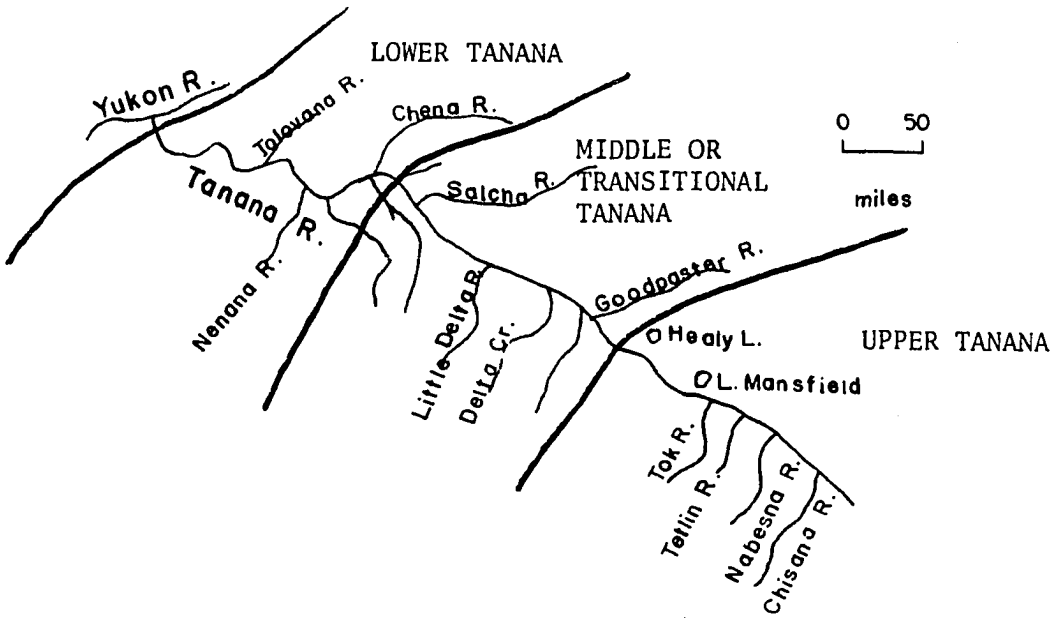


Fig. 12. Sociocultural Division of the Tanana River Indians (McKennan 1970).

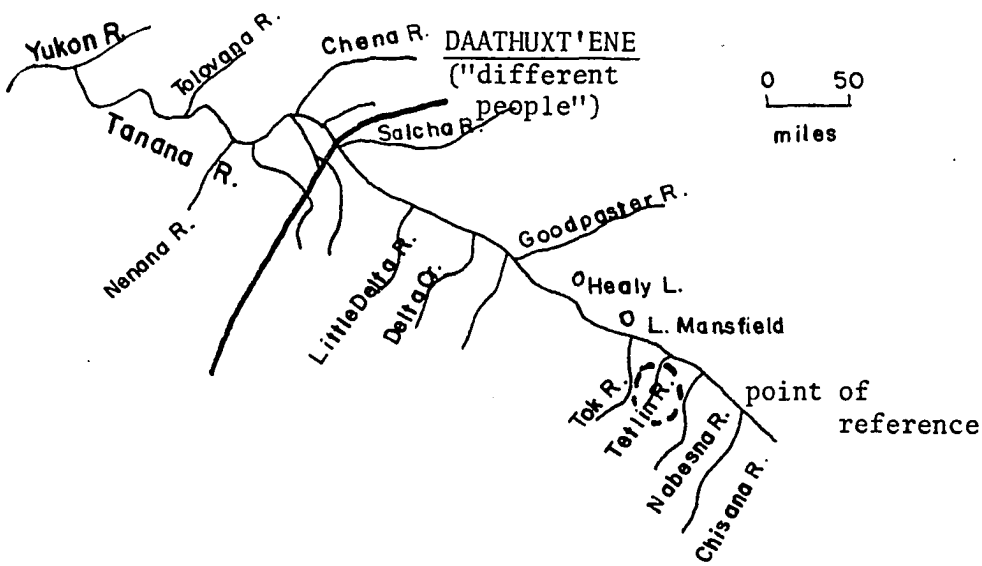


Fig. 13. Emic Sociocultural View of the Tanana Indians (Guedon 1971).

divisions are presented as 1) Intensive Riverine and Maritime Emphasis--salmon emphasis, some settlements with more than 100 persons, "dual" residence ("winter houses and summer fishing camps"); 2) Inland Riverine Emphasis--inland salmon emphasis with caribou and hare important, microbands less than 100 persons, "trilocal" residence ("winter houses, spring hunts, and summer fishing camps"); 3) Inland Hunting-Snaring Emphasis--no salmon, caribou emphasis with other large and small game, whitefish important, microbands less than 65 persons, and "frequent" movement throughout the annual cycle. As with the linguistic situation, Graburn and Strong (1973:76) point out that each pattern is not to be considered inflexible, but they "merge to form a spectrum of gradual variation from area to area with significant differences over a wide region." The perspective maintained in their scheme for viewing Northern Athapaskans, and one with which I am in full accord, is viewing the subsistence pattern from area to area in terms of emphasis. Graburn and Strong use this approach in viewing large areas and I have also found those designations to be useful, for example, for characterizing subsistence patterns between adjacent groups along the Tanana. While they did not deal with the entire river, it is clear that in viewing the river as a whole in terms of these broad subsistence categories, two of them occur along the Tanana River--Inland Riverine Emphasis and Inland Hunting-Snaring Emphasis.

Graburn and Strong (1973:75) include the Upper Tanana in the Inland Hunting-Snaring Emphasis. However, in spite of the clear emphasis on caribou, frequent annual movement was not always the case, since Guedon (1971:66) has shown for Mansfield and Tetlin that these two groups were less nomadic than some of the more upriver groups which McKennan (1959) described. The rest of the Tanana from the Goodpaster to its mouth, because of the presence of the various salmon species as well as caribou, would fall into the Inland Riverine Emphasis according to the Graburn and Strong scheme (Fig. 15). However, it seems that perhaps, like the Vunta Kutchin exception which Graburn and Strong (1973:75) note as "a borderline case between this and hunting-snaring emphasis" much of the Tanana, in terms of subsistence activities might be viewed in the same way. While microband population for Inland Riverine Emphasis is less than 100 persons, microband populations for the entire Tanana seem to correspond with population figures applied to the Inland Hunting-Snaring Emphasis of less than 65 persons. According to Graburn and Strong (1973:77), the less dependable nature of the caribou resource (relative to salmon for example) is reflected in the lower population of those emphasizing inland hunting and snaring. However, in spite of the supposedly more dependable salmon resource below the Goodpaster on the Tanana there is little change to speak of in microband population according to my data. With small salmon runs but with fish as

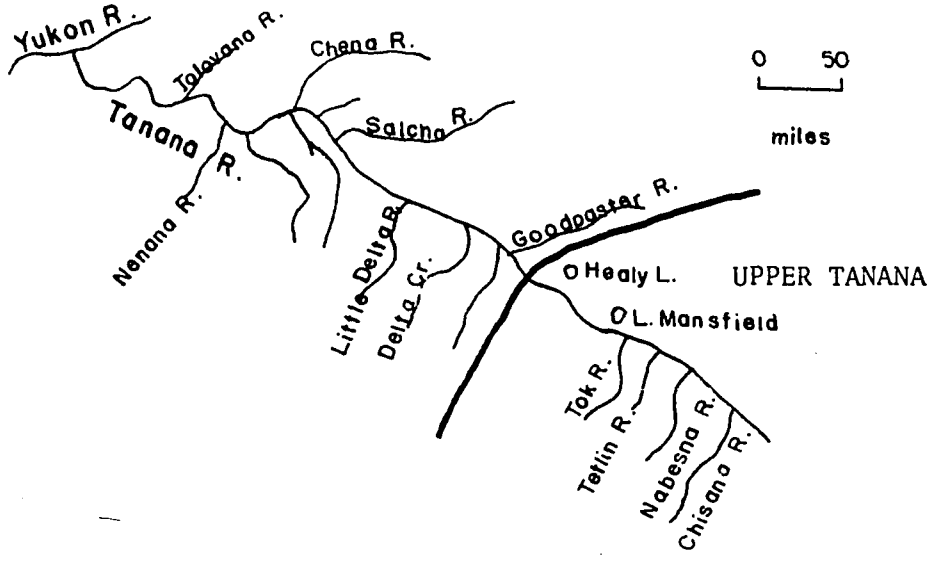


Fig. 14. The "Upper Tanana" (Guedon 1971).

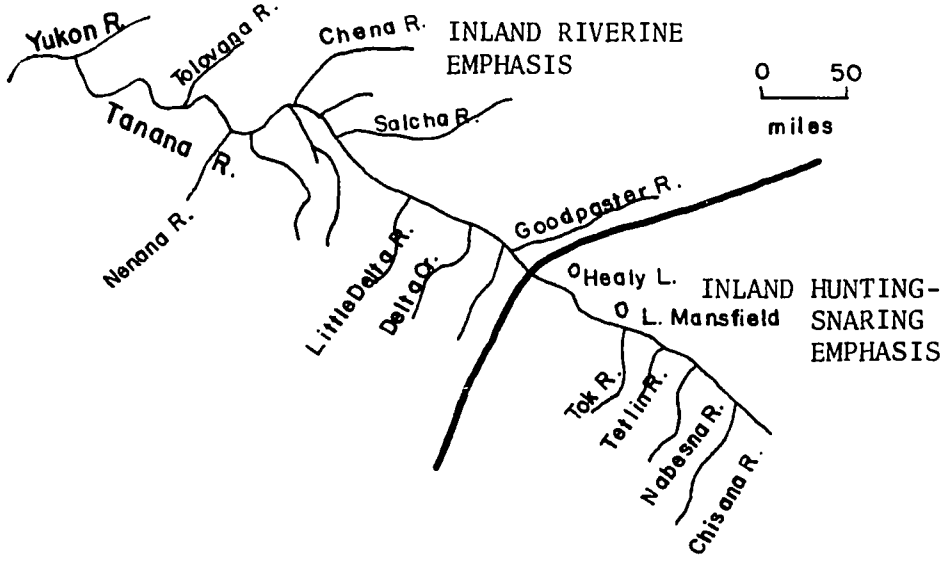


Fig. 15. Sociocultural Division of the Tanana River Indians by Subsistence Pattern (following Graburn and Strong 1973).

a "steady and more-or-less dependable food staple" and caribou contributing substantially to the diet of the Vunta Kutchin, Graburn and Strong (1973:73-74) determined a population of 200 to 400 persons, with the entire group coming together on certain occasions--a considerably larger population than the Salcha-Goodpaster bands with a similar subsistence pattern. This lower population may indicate a similar hunting-snaring emphasis for the rest of the Tanana, a less dependable salmon resource on the Tanana and its tributaries, or both. Salmon runs are better viewed not necessarily in terms of where they run and how far, but in terms of the spawning system (S. Tack:personal communication). For the Tanana, during the last fifteen to twenty years, it has been recorded that the Salcha River is a very good spawining area for king salmon while such rivers as the Goodpaster, Chena, Chatanika, Tolovana, and Nenana are by comparison less substantial in terms of a king salmon resource. In addition, the Big Delta area is an excellent spawning area for dog and silver salmon "fall fish" runs (25,000 and greater than 3,000 respectively in 1974) from early September to November (S. Tack:personal communication). The only other area cited as a good dog salmon spawning area were some of the Branches of the upper Kantishna River. Can we assume then that just because the Goodpaster people had salmon, albeit comparatively minimal to other salmon areas, they maintained a subsistence pattern much different than their upriver neighbors at Mansfield and Healy Lake who had a

fairly substantial whitefish resource often comparable to the Goodpaster salmon resource? I think not.

In addition, such a "trilocal" residence characteristic of the Inland Riverine Emphasis is not readily apparent for the Tanana although the very frequent movement as exemplified by the Nabesna, Scottie Creek, and Nabesna-Chisana bands described by McKennan (1959) and the Chandalar Kutchin (McKennan 1965) was not the case either. More data for the Tanana in terms of subsistence patterns might very well reveal that all of the Tanana River bands emphasized inland hunting and snaring and even McKennan's 1962 (1970:317) survey revealed the primary importance of hunting large game. However, to better accomodate such "borderline" cases as the Vunta Kutchin, the Salcha and Goodpaster (and probably most of the bands of the Tanana) perhaps another subsistence division should be added which would allow for an emphasis on hunting and snaring of big game without denying the importance of summer fishing. This would accomodate a smaller microband population and more frequent movement than a typical group with an Inland Riverine Emphasis, such as the Koyukon.

In viewing the Tanana River as a whole we are left with several perspectives from which to subdivide it in terms of Indian groups at the turn of this century. It is difficult to incorporate all perspectives--the geographic, linguistic, sociocultural--to present one division. The geographic

subdivisions have been shown to have little utility for viewing the Indian populations socioculturally. It has been shown that many groups along the Tanana do not meet the criteria of either the Inland Riverine or Inland Hunting-Snaring Emphasis of Graburn and Strong (1973) and that this perspective disregards major linguistic differences which may play a part in the intercultural interaction.

On the basis of data presented here, it seems reasonable to begin with the major linguistic differences in subdividing the Tanana inhabitants and their cultures. While Krauss' division is based on a current situation, I think it is reasonable to assume a time-depth to the beginning of the twentieth century for those language groups. In my opinion, the term "Tanana" as a sociocultural division should refer only to non-Koyukon speaking bands residing on or near the Tanana River. At present, there is no ethnographic data for those Koyukon-speaking Indians who resided on the lower portions of the Tanana to its mouth. Neither their life style nor their interrelationships with Tanana speakers are known at this time. Until such data are available which may reveal the similarities and differences between the two, I suggest that Koyukon-speaking bands on the lower reaches of the Tanana should be separated from non-Koyukon speakers and the term "Lower Tanana Indians" should not be used for either these Koyukon speakers or the non-Koyukon speakers residing on the lower reaches of the Tanana.

I would suggest a twofold classification (Fig. 16) of the non-Koyukon speakers on the Tanana River that would reflect linguistic and sociocultural criteria: Upper Tanana and Tanana. While the term "Upper Tanana" as used by Brooks (1900), Krauss (1974), and McKennan (1959) all coincide, Guedon (1971) suggests that the Tanacross (Mansfield) band, as well as some other downriver bands, should be included. Also, McKennan (1970) noted, on an ecological basis, that all bands above the Goodpaster should be included in an "upper Tanana" grouping. Socioculturally, it seems most reasonable to designate the Upper Tanana as distinguished from McKennan's (1959) Upper Tanana to include all bands above the Goodpaster. It is possible that a further subdivision would include Transitional Tanana (not to be confused with the geographical designation "middle Tanana"). The dialectal congruity of the Salcha and Goodpaster bands as well as the specialized taking of salmon in unique salmon traps in those clearwater rivers, I think, would warrant their grouping as Transitional Tanana. also a suggestion of McKennan (1970). In addition, the exceptional "fall fish" runs between the Salcha and Goodpaster is a feature not found elsewhere on the Tanana. However, in light of my data, the "essentially hunting nature of the culture" predominates. Had the Goodpaster people not had frequent reciprocal fishing/hunting arrangements with the Salcha, their salmon take often was probably as substantial as the whitefish takes at Healy and Mansfield lakes and could justify

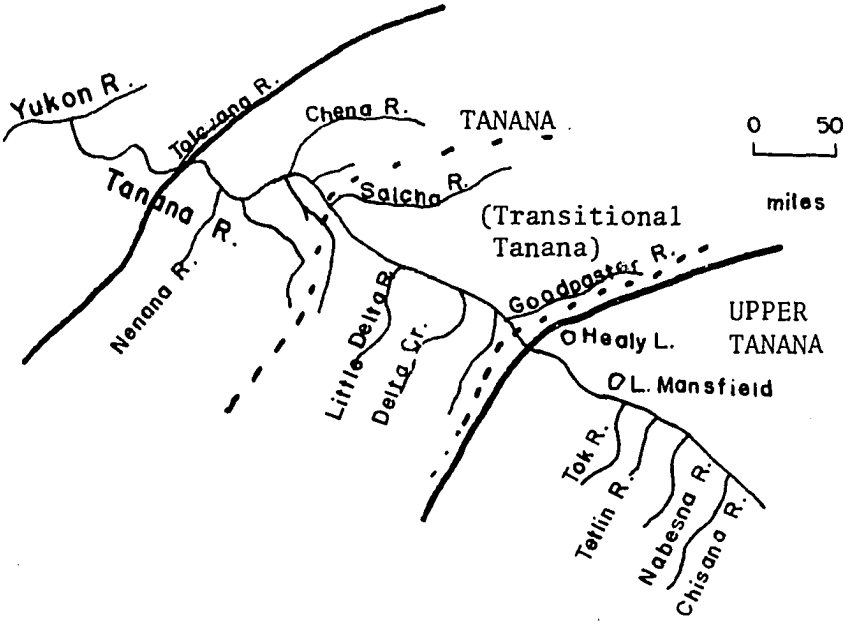
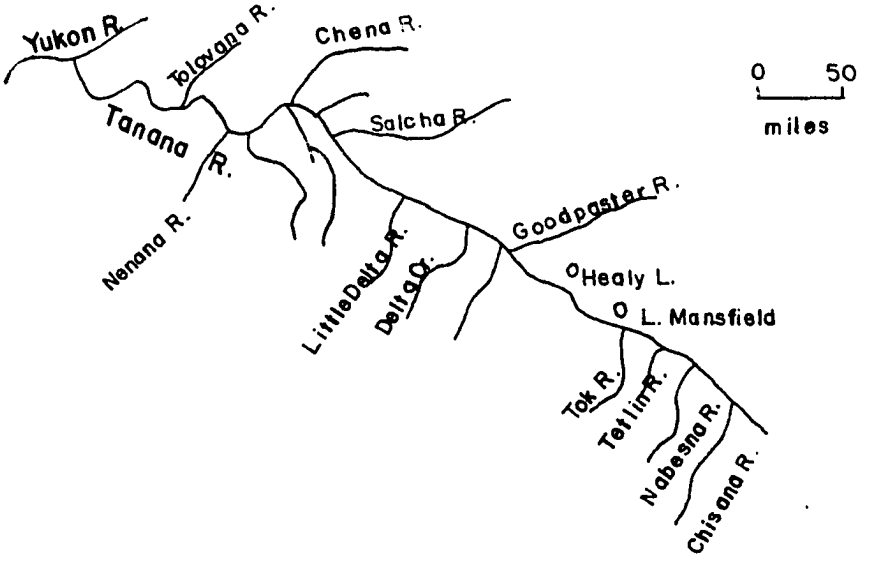


Fig. 16. Suggested Sociocultural Division of the Tanana River Indians



their inclusion with the Upper Tanana. But whether the Tanana-speaking bands on the rest of the Tanana took any more salmon by whatever means (prior to the introduction of the fish wheel) than the Salcha or Goodpaster is unknown at this time. There is evidence that the salmon resources on the rest of the Tanana were not any more substantial than at Salcha and probably less so in terms of a spawning system. Ethnographic data for Minto also reveal an essentially hunting-snaring nature for that band as well (D. Slaby:personal communication). Although there is some reason to designate a separate grouping of Transitional Tanana, it seems more plausible to combine all Tanana-speaking bands below the Goodpaster into one group--the Tanana. This group had salmon resources which were fairly substantial and the microbands came together occasionally during the year. While the microband population was less than 65 persons, band dispersal during much of the year and the hunting-snaring of large and small game was the primary activity.

APPENDIX

NOTE ON SALCHA TRANSCRIPTION

At present, no orthography exists for the Salcha dialect. The chart below presents consonant and vowel sounds used in linguistic transcription.

Consonant Sounds

b	d	dl	ddh	dz	j	g	'
	t	tl	tth	ts	ch	k	
	t'	tl'	tth'	ts'	ch'	k'	
		ɬ	th	s	sh	kh(x)	h
		l	dh	z		gh	
		n		y			

Vowel Sounds

i	feet
u	food
aa	fought
e	cat
a	but
o	boat

REFERENCES

Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat
1973 State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game, Anchorage.

Allen, H.T.
1900 A Military Reconnoissance of the Copper River Valley, 1885. In Compilation of Narratives of Explorations in Alaska. Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 411-488.

Anon.
1909 The Alaskan Churchman, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 12.

Baggen, M.
n.d. Field notes, 1962-1967.

Bean, L.J.
1972 Mukat's People. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Betticher, C.E.
1910 Report 1909-1910. The Alaskan Churchman, Vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 57-59.

1911 The Salchaket Mission. The Alaskan Churchman, Vol. 6, No. 1.

Brooks, A.H.
1900 A Reconnaisance in the Tanana and White River Basins, Alaska in 1898. Government Printing Office, Washington.

1905 The Geography and Geology of Alaska. Government Printing Office, Washington.

1973 Blazing Alaska's Trails. University of Alaska Press, College.

Castner, J.C.
1900 A Story of Hardship and Suffering in Alaska. In Compilation of Narratives of Explorations in Alaska. Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 689-709.

Dall, W.H.
1870 Alaska and Its Resources. Lee and Shepard, Boston.

Damas, D.
1969 Contributions to Anthropology: Band Societies. D. Damas, ed. National Museums of Canada Bulletin No. 228. Ottawa.

Ernest, J.R.
1971 The Hare in Alaska. Alaska Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Notebook Series.

Graburn, N.H.H. and B.S. Strong
1973 Circumpolar Peoples: An Anthropological Perspective. Goodyear Publishing Company, Inc., Pacific Palisades.

Greenfield, W.
1893 Report on Population and Resources of Alaska at the Eleventh Census: 1890. Government Printing Office, Washington.

Grider, M.S.
1911 A Visit to Salchaket. The Alaskan Churchman, Vol. 6, No. 1.

Griffiths, C.E.
1900 From Knik Station to Eagle City. In Compilation of Narratives of Explorations in Alaska. Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 724-733.

Guedon, M-F.
1971 People of Tetlin, Why are you Singing? A Study of the Social Life of the Upper Tanana Indians. Ph.D. dissertation, Bryn Mawr College. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.

Harris, M.
1971 Culture, Man, and Nature. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York.

Heinrich, A.
1957 Sib and Social Structure on the Upper Tanana. Proceedings of the 8th Alaskan Science Conference. Alaska Division--American Association for the Advancement of Science, Anchorage, pp. 10-22.

Helm, J.
1965 Bilaterality in the Socio-territorial Organization of the Arctic Drainage Dene. Ethnology, Vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 361-385.

1968 The Nature of Dogrib Socioterritorial Groups. In Man the Hunter. R. Lee and I. DeVore, eds. Aldine, Chicago, pp. 118-125.

Helm, J., T. Alliband, T. Birk, V. Lawson, S. Reisner, C. Sturtevant, and S. Witkowski
n.d. The Contact History of the Subarctic Athapaskans: An Overview. In Press. Proceedings of the 1971 Conference on Athapaskan Studies. Publications in Ethnology. National Museums of Canada. Ottawa.

Hemming, J.E.
1971 The Distribution and Movement Patterns of Caribou in Alaska. Alaska Department of Fish and Game Technical Bulletin No. 1.

Hodge, F.W.
1912 Handbook of Indians North of Mexico. F.W. Hodge, ed. Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin No. 30, Part II. Government Printing Office, Washington.

Hoijer, H.
1956 Athapaskan Kinship Systems. American Anthropologist, Vol. 58, No. 2, pp. 309-333.

Jackson, E.L.
1919 A Salchaket Soliloquy. The Alaskan Churchman, Vol. 13, No. 4, pp. 114-115.

Krauss, M.E.
1973 Na-Dene. Current Trends in Linguistics, Vol. 10, Pt. 2, pp. 903-978.

1974 Native Peoples and Languages of Alaska. Map. University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Lee, R.B. and I. DeVore, eds.
1968 Man the Hunter. Aldine, Chicago.

Loyens, W.
1966 The Changing Culture of the Nulato Koyukon Indians. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin.

Major Ecosystems of Alaska
1973 Map compiled by the Joint Federal State Land Use Planning Commission for Alaska.

Maranda, E.K. and P. Maranda
1971 Structural Models in Folklore and Transformational Essays. Mouton, Paris.

McClellan, C.
1964 Culture Contacts in the Early Historic Period in Northwestern North America. Arctic Anthropology, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 3-15.

1969 Discussion on A Method of Statistical Analysis of Primary Relative Bonds in Community Composition. J. Helm. In Contributions to Anthropology: Band Societies. D. Damas, ed. National Museums of Canada Bulletin No. 228. Ottawa, pp. 231-239.

1970 The Girl Who Married the Bear. National Museums of Canada Publications in Ethnology, No. 2. Ottawa.

McKennan, R.A.
1959 The Upper Tanana Indians. Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 55. New Haven.

1969 Athapaskan Groupings and Social Organization in Central Alaska. In Contributions to Anthropology: Band Societies. D. Damas, ed. National Museums of Canada Bulletin No. 228. Ottawa, pp. 93-115.

1970 Athapaskan Groups of Central Alaska at the Time of White Contact. 7th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Vol. 10. Moscow, pp. 314-319.

McManus, G,
1900 A Reconnoissance Between Circle City and the Tanana. In Compilation of Narratives of Explorations in Alaska. Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 751-752.

McQuesten, L.N.
1952 Recollections of Leroy N. McQuesten of Life in the Yukon 1871-1885. Yukon Order of Pioneers.

Meaker, P.
1908 The Tanana Valley. Alaska-Yukon Magazine, February 4, 1908, pp. 437-448.

Mitchell, W.
1904 Statement of Lt. William Mitchell, U.S. Army, Eagle, Alaska, July 16, 1903. In Hearings Before Subcommittee of Committee on Territories Appointed to Investigate Conditions in Alaska. Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 54-64.

Murdock, G.
1949 Social Structure. The Free Press, New York.

Murie, O.J.
1935 Alaska-Yukon Caribou. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Biological Survey, Government Printing Office, Washington.

Nelson, R.K.
1973 Hunters of the Northern Forest. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Olson, S.T.
n.d. The Dall Sheep in Alaska. Alaska Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Notebook Series, Mammals: No. 9.

Olson, W.M.
1968 Minto, Alaska: Cultural and Historical Influences on Group Identity. M.A. Thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Orth, D.J.
1967 Dictionary of Alaska Place Names. Geological Survey Professional Paper 567. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington.

Osgood, C.
1936 The Distribution of Northern Athapaskan Indians. Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 7. New Haven, pp. 3-23.

1971 The Han Indians. Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 74. New Haven.

Paul, D.
1957 According to Papa. St. Matthew's Episcopal Guild, Fairbanks.

Peters, W.J. and A.H. Brooks
1899 Report of the White River-Tanana Expedition. In Maps and Descriptions of Routes of Exploration in Alaska in 1898. Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 64-75.

Rainey, F.G.
1939 Archaeology in Central Alaska. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 36, Pt. 4, pp. 353-405.

Raymond, C.P.
1900 Reconnoissance of the Yukon River, 1869. In Compilation of Narratives of Explorations in Alaska. Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 19-41.

Rice, J.F.
1900 From Valdez to Eagle City. In Compilation of Narratives of Explorations in Alaska. Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 784-789.

Rowe, Bishop
1920 Historical Data of Alaskan Missions. The Alaskan Churchman, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 88.

Schwatka, F.
1900 A Reconnoissance of the Yukon Valley, 1883. In Compilation of Narratives of Explorations in Alaska. Government Printing Office, Washington, pp. 285-362.

Service, E.R.
1962 Primitive Social Organization. Random House, New York.

Skoog, R.O.
1956 Range, Movements, Population, and Food Habits of the Steese-Fortymile Caribou Herd. M.S. Thesis, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Solka, P.
1970 Letter to R.A. McKennan, January 10, 1970.

Steward, J.
1955 Theory of Culture Change. University of Illinois Press, Urbana.

Swineford, A.P.
1887 Report of the Governor of Alaska, 1887. In Report of the Governor to the Secretary of the Interior. Washington.

Wahrhaftig, C.
1965 Physiographic Divisions of Alaska. Geological Survey Professional Paper 482. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington.

Wightman, M.R.
1911 St. Luke's Mission, Salchaket. The Alaskan Churchman, Vol. 6, No. 1.